

SAINT PAULS.

August, 1869.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

CHAPTER VII.

PUT TO THE TOUCH.

BEN rushed up the narrow stairs three steps at a time, while Millicent sat listening with her heart beating against her breast. If he had known the flutter it was making, how glad, how hopeful, how proud the poor young fool would have been! And it was all for him. A sudden hush fell upon him as he went in at the sacred door. Such a privilege had never been accorded him before. He had sat with Millicent by her mother's side; he had spoken to her even while Mrs. Tracy went about from one occupation to another, leaving them virtually alone; but to have her all to himself for,—how long?—a year,—half an hour,—a splendid moment detached from ordinary calculations of time! His eagerness died into the stillness of passion as he went in. She did not get up from her seat, but greeted him with a little touch of her lovely hand, with a subdued gracious smile. If it could be possible that she was a little moved by it,—a little breathless, too! He came and sat down opposite the window, as near her as he dared;—his eyes now shining, poor fellow! and great waves of colour passing over his face.

"Your mother said I might come," he faltered, with the very imbecility of blessedness. And Millicent nodded her beautiful head kindly at him again.

"Mamma thought I would be lonely," she said. "Poor dear mamma! she thinks too much of me."

"That is not possible," said Ben. "And,—how could she think of anything else? Ah, if you would but let me try to amuse you a little! You are so young,—so—; I envy your brother," said the lover, growing red, "when I see how you give him all your thoughts."

"Not all," said Millicent, "oh, indeed, not all! Poor Fitzgerald!

But we have so many things to think of. There is no more amusement for poor mamma and me."

"Amusement is a poor sort of thing," said Ben. "You don't think I meant balls and operas? I am not such a wretched fellow as that. What I meant was, if,—if you would but try to look round you, and see that there are others in the world,——" here he made a pause, half out of awe of the words that were on his lips, half with a lover's device to fix her attention upon them, half because of the grasp of passion upon himself which impeded his breathing and his voice,—“who love you,” said Ben at last, abruptly, “as well,—ten thousand times better than any brother in the world.”

He was not thinking of Hamlet,—but passion is something like genius, and finds a similar expression now and then in very absence of all thought.

“Ah, Mr. Renton,” said Millicent, “you must not say those sort of things to me. Poor, dear Fitzgerald was not so very fond of me. Some women get loved like that, but I don't think I am one of them. Hush now! If you are going to speak nonsense I must send you away.”

“It is no nonsense,” said Ben. “If you could but have seen my heart all the time I have been here! It has had no thought but one. I know I am a fool to say so,—if I were a prince instead of a disinherited knight——”

“Disinherited?” said Millicent, losing in a moment the soft droop of her hand, the soft fall of her eyelids,—all those tender indications of a modest emotion,—sitting bolt upright and looking him straight in the face. “Mr. Renton, what do you mean?”

The suddenness of the change gave him a certain thrill. He did not understand it, nor had he time at such a moment to pause and ask himself what it meant. He felt the jar all over him, but went on all the same. “Yes, I am disinherited,” he said, leaning over her, meeting her startled glance with eyes full of such a real and fiery glow of passion as struck her dumb. “If it had not been so, could I have borne to keep silent all this time and never say a word to you? I am a wretch to say anything now. I have been a fool to come here. Now I think of it, I have no right to any answer. I have nothing,—nothing to offer. But, Millicent, let me tell you,—don't deny me that,—this once!”

“Mr. Renton,” said Millicent, “I do not know what you have to tell me. It is so strange, all this. And I have been thinking all the time you were—— Never mind speaking to me about myself; that does not interest me. Tell me about this.”

“I will tell you everything,” said Ben, “and then you will give me my sentence,—death or life,—that is what it will be. Don't take up your work. Oh, how can you be so calm, you women! Cannot you see what it is to me;—death or life?”

Millicent looked up at him, dropping her work hesitatingly on her knee. When he met that glance, the blue eyes looked so wondering, so wistful, so innocent, that poor Ben in his madness got down on his knees and kissed the hand that lay in her lap and the muslin that surrounded it, and cried out, with a kind of sweet heart-break;—"Yes, it is right you should be calm; I love you best so. For me, the earth and the passions; for you, heaven. I agree,—that is what God must have meant."

With a deeper wonder still,—a real wonder,—that made her face angelic, Millicent listened, and felt the hot lips touch her hand. What did the madman mean? What was he agreeing to and approving? Had he found her out? Was he mocking her? She was so bewildered that she said nothing; and she was touched, too, at her heart. She had an impulse to lay her other hand on his head, and smooth down the curls upon it with a touch of natural kindness and pity. Poor boy! whose head was all running on wild nonsense, and who could not understand the nature of her thoughts. "Mr. Renton," she said, with a little tremble in her voice, which was not affected,—“I am alone. Whatever you have to say to me it must not be said in this way."

He rose up abashed and penitent, poor fellow, feeling the serene, fair creature worlds above him; and yet taking courage because of that little shake in her voice. "Forgive me," he said, with broken words,—“I did not know any better. I thought on my knees was the most natural way. But I see. A man goes on his knees to the woman that loves him; but I—only love you."

And then he stood away from her and gazed at her, looking down from his height on her low seat, her drooping head, with such humility and splendour of devotion, that poor Millicent was dazzled. Men had told her this same thing before, but never in this way. Somehow it made her shrink a little, and feel a certain shame. Not good enough to go on his knees to her, he thought;—and yet, oh, so much more innocent, so much purer and better than she! Such an extraordinary scene had never occurred to her before; and in face of the unknown being standing before her, all her experience failed, and she could not tell what to do. "Don't speak like that," she said, half peevishly, in her discomfiture. "I am not a queen, nor Una, nor anything of the kind; and you are not King Arthur, that I know of. Come and sit down by me as you were before, and tell me about yourself. That is much more interesting. I do not believe you are disinherited. Come and tell me what you mean."

After a moment Ben obeyed. He was nearer to her so; and she sat and gazed up at him, with heartfelt interest, which made him flush all over with a warm thrill of happiness. She gave all her attention to his story. He told her everything, watching the fluctuations, the shades of surprise, of sympathy, of something else which

he could not divine, on her face. Once she put out her hand to him with a momentary compassionate impulse. She was deeply interested; there was no fiction in that. She was still more deeply disappointed, —sorry for herself, sorry for him. And Ben thought it was all for him. When she took her hand back again, away from him, and sighed, and suffered the cloud to fall over her face, his heart began to ache for her; for her, not for himself. He had roused her sympathy too far; —he had given her pain.

"Don't be so sorry for me," he said, with his lip quivering, "or you will make me too happy. What do I mind if you care? I am young enough to make a way for myself,—and, Millicent, for you too,—if—" cried the young man, drawing closer to her. What could she do with such a passionate suitor? Perhaps she was not so sensitive to avoid the touch, the close approach, the almost embrace of the man she could not accept, as a more innocent girl would have been; though, indeed, there was not a touch of the wanton in her, poor girl! She was an adventuress and mercenary; —that was all.

"Oh, Mr. Renton, don't speak so!" she said, "you don't know what you are saying. Though I am a woman I know the world better than you do. It is very, very hard to make your way. Look at poor Fitzgerald. And when you have tied a burden round your neck to begin with! Ah, no; you must not talk of this any more."

"Burden!" cried Ben, all glowing and brightening. "I like that! Divine cordial you mean;—elixir of life, to make a man twice as strong, twice as able. Ah, look here, Millicent—you said round my neck!"

"I said nonsense," she said, withdrawing from him; "and so do you. Double nonsense,—folly! What could we two do together? I did not know about this, or that your father was dead, or anything. Don't look so wondering at me. What had I do with it? Mr. Renton, I have not been brought up rich like you. I know what the world is, and bitter, bitter poverty. Oh, how bitter it is! You are playing at being poor; but if you should ever be put to such shifts as some people are;—if you should have to fly and hide yourself for the want of a little money;—if you had to live hard, and be shabby, and not very honest——. Oh, don't speak to me!" cried Millicent, turning away from him, and bursting into uncontrollable tears. She was angry, and her heart was sore; she had seemed so near comfort, and prosperity, and happiness. "Even I could have been fond of him!" she said to herself, bitterly. And now he could tell her calmly that he was disinherited! Such a disappointment after such a delicious sense of security was more than Millicent could bear. She could govern herself, as a man guides a horse, when she chose; but when she did not choose, her self-abandonment was absolute.

Since he was to be good for nothing to her, she cared no longer for what Ben Renton might think. She thrust her pretty shoulders up, and turned from him and cried. She was sick with disappointment. And it was her way not to care for appearances except when they were of use, which they could no longer be here.

As for Ben, he sat looking on with a consternation and amazement not to be described. He grew sick, too, and faint, and giddy with the great downfall. But he was no more able to understand her now than she had been to understand him a little while before. For some minutes he only gazed at her, his own eyes brimming over with remorse,—for was it not he who had driven her to tears? And he felt for her the tenderest longing and pity. He wanted to take her into his arms to comfort her; and would not, being too reverent to take such advantage of her distress. But he could not sit still and look on. He got up and went away to the other end of the room, shaking the whole house with his agitated steps. Then he came and knelt down before her, and touched softly the hands that covered her face.

"Oh, Millicent," he cried, "don't break my heart! I would rather have died than deceived you. Tell me what is the matter. Tell me what I can do. I will do anything in the world you please. It cannot be you who are poor. You ought to have everything. Oh, Millicent, say one word to me if you do not mean to break my heart!"

"It would do no good if I were to speak," sobbed Millicent. "I have nothing to say. Go away, and never mind,—that is the best."

"But I will mind; and I cannot go away," said Ben; and he drew one of her hands from her flushed cheek, and held it fast. He "made her do it." That was what she said to herself years after when the remembrance would rankle in her mind. He made her do it. He held her hand close in his, and drew from her the story of all her woes: their debts, their destitution; her mother's health, which was failing, the baths in Germany which she was ordered, but could not get to,—all the miserable story. She poured it out to Ben as she never would have done had he been her accepted lover,—mingling the narrative with tears, with broken sobs, with entreaties to him not to make her say more. And all the time her hand was in his,—soft, and warm, and trembling;—her eyes now raised to him with pitiful looks, now sinking in shame and distress. And there was nobody near to interfere in this humiliating scene. Even the mother, who was lingering intentionally along the streets to give full time for the explanation, would have shrunk with a pang of pride and horror from such a revelation as this. But the two were alone, and had it all their own way. Ben himself sat by Millicent's side in a very ecstacy of tenderness and pity. If he could but have taken her in his arms, and carried her away,—away from the suffering, the trouble, the shame! Yes, he felt

there was shame in it,—confusedly, painfully, with a burning red on his cheek,—and yet was intoxicated and overwhelmed by her touch, by her look, by the love he had for her. They sat together as in a trance,—passion, tenderness, trickery, mean hopes and great, shame and pride and dear love, all mingling together. Such a story to be linked on to a love-tale!—such a love, veiling its face with its wings, loving the deeper to hide the shame!

When Mrs. Tracy returned, with a very audible knock at the door, Ben rose and tore himself away, his heart, and even his bodily frame, all thrilling and tingling with the excitement through which he had passed. She had no sooner ascended the stairs than he seized his hat and tore out, jumping into the first hansom he encountered, with the instinct of old times, and dashing down to the far-off City,—blocked up as ever in all its thoroughfares where men in haste would pass. It was not too late to find his father's agent in one of the mean alleys about Cheapside, who would pay him his allowance. It was just the time for it, by good luck. And then he rushed off to Christie's, and had an earnest conversation about the buhl and the china which were not yet sold. He took no time to consider anything;—such a state of affairs could not, must not last a day. This was what he was saying to himself over and over. It must not last. He had no room for more than that thought.

When Mrs. Tracy entered the drawing-room she found her daughter lying back in her chair, with her handkerchief pressed to her eyes. Millicent let her approach without uncovering her face, or taking any notice, and the anxiety of the mother grew into alarm as she drew near. She had said, "Well?" with expectation and interest as she came in, feeling very sure of the tale there must be to tell. But as she came nearer and saw that Millicent did not move, Mrs. Tracy got very much frightened. "Good heavens, Millicent! do you mean to say it has come to nothing?" she cried sharply, with keen anxiety. But Millicent was by no means prepared to answer. She had been shaken by this totally unexpected, unlikely sort of interview. It had gone to her heart, though she had not been very sure whether she had a heart; and she did not know now how to explain, or what to say.

"Has it come to nothing?" Mrs. Tracy repeated, coming up and shaking her daughter by the shoulder. "Millicent! are not you ashamed of yourself? What have you been doing? I know he has only just left you, for I heard him rush down-stairs."

"It has come to a great deal," said Millicent, uncovering her flushed and tear-stained cheeks. "Don't worry me, mamma. I will tell you everything if you will but let me alone."

"Everything!" said Mrs. Tracy in an excited tone.

"Yes, everything; but it is nothing," said Millicent, doggedly. "You must not give yourself any hopes. It is all over. It will never

come to more ; but you shall not say a word," she added, with indignation. "I tell you I am fond of him. I will not have anything said. He is too good for you or me."

"It will never come to more!" echoed Mrs. Tracy, holding up her hands in amaze and appeal to heaven. "And she dares to look me in the face and say so! Six months lost,—and rent, and firing, and the bills!" cried the injured mother. Then she threw herself down in a chair, and moaned, and rocked herself. "If it is to come to nothing!" she said. "Oh, you ungrateful, unkind girl! oh, my poor Fitzgerald!—perhaps you'll tell me what we are to do."

A little pause ensued. The disappointment was too sharp and bitter to be kept within the bounds of politeness, and Millicent was not prepared to enter into full explanations. While Mrs. Tracy vented her disappointment in reproaches, her daughter sat flushed, tearful, motionless, dreaming over the scene that had passed, wondering within herself whether anything could, anything would come of it after all,—neither hearing nor listening to her mother,—half-ashamed of herself, and yet not come to an end of expectation still. "He will do something, whatever it is," she said to herself. "It has not ended here."

"I never would have stayed on in these dear lodgings," Mrs. Tracy went on; "never, but for this; you know I wouldn't. It was only to have been for a week or two when we came. Oh, the money you have cost me,—you and your nonsense! And now nothing is to come of it! Am I never to be the better of my children,—I that have done so much for them? To waste all my life and my means, and everything; and nothing to come of it!" she cried. "Oh, you are a beautiful manager! And six months lost for this!"

"Mamma, you need not be so violent," said Millicent. "It is not my fault. Do you think I am not as disappointed as you can be? And some good may come of it, though not what we thought. He will make it up to you somehow. For my part I have no doubt of that."

"What is it you have no doubt of?" said Mrs. Tracy. "You are more and more a mystery to me. Good gracious, Millicent! you make me think you have fallen in love with him,—or,—some folly! But you must leave that sort of thing to people who can afford it. We must have some prospect for the future,—or,—we must leave this."

"Yes, mamma; only just leave me alone,—I can't talk," she said, fretfully; but then added, with an effort, "It is not his fault, poor fellow! He is disinherited. Could he help that? It was we who were the fools to think he would come to this poky place all for me."

Mrs. Tracy swelled to such heights of moral indignation as would have annihilated Ben had he been present, when she heard this.

"Disinherited!" she cried. "Millicent, you may say what you like, but it is nothing less than swindling. Good heavens, to think of such a thing! Disinherited! Do you mean to tell me it is a man without a penny that one has been paying such attention to? Oh, what a world this is! He might just as well have robbed me of fifty pounds, —not that fifty pounds would pay the expense I have been at. And I don't believe a word of it!" she cried, getting up with sudden passion. If there had been anyone below to hear how her foot thrilled across the echoing floor, she might even now have restrained herself. But she knew that nobody was below.

"I believe it," said Millicent, rousing up. "He was too much in earnest, poor boy! He wanted to work for me, and all kinds of nonsense. And it would be better to have him to work for me," she added, half-tenderly, half-defiant, "though he has not a penny, than be worried and bullied like this every day of one's life."

"Are you mad?" cried her mother, stopping suddenly, appalled by the words. "You are in love with him, you wicked girl! You are in a plot with this beggar against me."

"He shall not be called a beggar!" cried Millicent, "so long as I am here to speak for him. It is we who are beggars, not Ben Renton."

"You are in love with him!" cried Mrs. Tracy, almost with a scream of scorn. The accusation was such that Millicent shrank before it for the moment, but she did not give way.

"I wonder if I shall ever be in love with anybody again?" she said; and then a sigh burst from her unawares. "Poor fellow! poor boy! He is so good, and he will never forget me!"

"If he had really cared a straw for you he would never have come here!" cried Mrs. Tracy. "Love!—call that love! for a man without a penny! I call it pure selfishness. But he shall never come near you again,—never. Oh, what am I to do?—where am I to take you? We cannot stay here."

"We are going to Wiesbaden, for your health," said Millicent. It came upon her all at once that she had told him so, making use, involuntarily, of her mother's suggestion. "Wait, and see what comes of it," she added, with oracular meaning, which she did not herself understand. And after a while Mrs. Tracy's passion sank into quiet too. When people live from day to day without any power of arranging matters beforehand, and specially when they live upon their wits, trusting to the scheme of the minute for such comforts as it can secure, they have to believe in chances good and evil. Something might come of it. Somehow, at the last moment, matters might mend. She sat down with that power of abstracting herself from her anxiety which is given to the mind of the adventurer, and recovered her breath, and took her cup of tea. She had scarcely finished that refreshment when the maid knocked at the drawing-room door with Ben's letter. Mrs. Tracy flew at her

daughter as though she would have torn the meaning out of the paper, which Millicent opened with the slowness of agitation; but she had to wait all the same while it was gone over twice, every word; the very enclosures in it,—and it was very evident that there were enclosures,—were hidden in Millicent's clenched hand from her mother's eyes. She was wilfully cruel in her self-humiliation. And yet it was Mrs. Tracy, and not Millicent, who answered the letter which poor Ben had written, as it were, with his heart's blood.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. TRACY'S I. O. U.

MRS. TRACY'S answer to Ben's letter was as follows:—

“MY DEAR MR. RENTON,

“Millicent has placed your most kind and generous letter in my hands. It is everything I have said, but it is a very extraordinary letter as well; and it is impossible for a young creature without any knowledge of the world to answer it. It takes all my judgment,—and I have passed through a good deal,—to decide how to do it. I would not for the world hurt your feelings, dear Mr. Renton, and I am convinced that to act according to the dictates of pride, and decline your most kind little loan, would be to hurt your feelings. Therefore I make the sacrifice of my own. I don't replace your notes in this, as pride tempts me to do. I keep them for your sake.

“And, besides,—why should I hesitate to confess it?—we are poor. I cannot do for Millicent,—I cannot do for myself, though that matters less,—what I would. I don't know how far my poor child went in her confidences to you to-day. She was agitated,—and she is still agitated,—though I have done all I could to soothe her. She is much affected by your sympathy and generosity; and yet, with the shrinking delicacy which characterises her, she cannot forgive herself for telling you. ‘I could not help it, mamma,—he was so feeling,’ my poor darling says to me, with tears in her eyes. God bless you, dear Mr. Renton! With this timely aid, which I accept as a loan, my Millicent's poor mother may still be spared to watch over her child. It would have been impossible for me to go, and I tried to hide from my pet the urging of my physicians. Now it is all clear before us. I enclose a memorandum for the amount at five per cent. interest; but what interest can ever repay the kind consideration, the ready thoughtfulness? I can never forget it, and neither can Millicent. When I say that we shall leave almost immediately, I but say that we are carrying out your intention. We shall miss you in that strange land. How sweet if we could hope to meet our benefactor among its gay groups! Millicent tells me something about

your circumstances, which it seems impossible to believe. But if it should be true, dear Mr. Renton, how sweet it will be to your mind to feel that your little savings, if diverted from their original intention, will yet go to carry out one of the most sacred offices of Christianity,—to save a mother, the sole guide and protector of her innocence, to her only child!

"Believe me, my dear Mr. Renton, with the sincerest kind regards and good wishes,

"Yours obliged and most truly,

"MARIA TRACY."

"Will that do?" she said, thrusting the paper across the table to Millicent, who sat looking on. Her mother's style of letter-writing was very well known to her; but her heart was beating a little quicker than usual, and it was not without excitement that she took it up. Altogether, the day had been a strange one for her. It had brought her in contact with genuine, real passion; and at the same time with a rare, almost unknown thing to her,—a man, with all the instincts of power, unconscious of those restraints which make I dare not wait upon I would. There is something in wealth which now and then confers a certain moral power and unthought-of force and energy. Millicent's friends and lovers had been hitherto of a class quite different from Ben. They had been men to whom appearance was more than reality,—who were accustomed to look richer than they were, and to own the restrictions of small means,—men who could not, had they wished it, have cut a way for her through a difficulty, as Ben did with sudden flash of purpose. In fact, he was poorer than any of the half-bred men to whom Mrs. Tracy had all but offered her daughter; but the habit of hesitation or considering possibilities had not yet come upon him. Simply, he had not been able to bear the thought of want or difficulty or pain for her, and had rushed at the matter without a moment's pause, or any consideration but that of doing her service. It was quite new to Millicent. It dazzled her imagination more a long way than it touched her heart. She was not grateful to speak of, but she was profoundly impressed by the man to whom a hundred pounds,—that mighty object of thought to herself and everybody she had ever known,—was no more than a bouquet or a pair of gloves. She was not, even at that moment, ashamed of having all but asked, or of receiving, his help. She was only dazzled by the magnificence, the sudden lavish zeal and service of her lover. She read her mother's letter slowly and critically. "As if he wanted to be paid back, or have interest at five per cent.!" she said. The mother's were very different thoughts.

"It looks better," she said. "And if we ever are able to pay him back, Millicent,—besides, it is putting it in a business way. Every man likes to see things put in a business way; though this is such a

young fool——” said Mrs. Tracy. “I never met with such a fool in all my life.”

“He is not a fool,” said Millicent, angrily. “It is the way he has been brought up. He has not been taught to consider money as we have. Oh, me! should we all be like that if we were all rich?” she asked herself with a little thrill of wonder. Mrs. Tracy smiled grimly as she put poor Ben’s bank-notes,—everything the foolish youth had possessed in the world,—into an old pocket-book, which she took out of her desk.

“No, indeed,” she said, “not such fools as to give up solid good for nonsense. Why, only fancy what he might have had for his hundred pounds! He might have gone to Homburg himself, and got a great deal of amusement out of it. He might have gone to Switzerland. With all his friends and good introductions, he might have got through the season with it,”—this was all Mrs. Tracy knew,—“with his club and dining out, and so forth. And because you cry a little he gives it to you! No, if I were made of money, I never could be so foolish as that.”

“Nobody ever minded my crying much before,” said Millicent, with a touch of sullenness; and then she threw the letter on the table. “Certainly,” she said, “a hundred pounds is a high price for that.”

“I accept it as a loan,” said Mrs. Tracy, wrapping herself once more in the appearances she loved. “Of course I should never think of taking money from Mr. Renton in any other way. And I wish you would see to your packing at once. We never had such a chance before. Oh, Millicent, if you don’t make something of it this time, how can I ever have any heart again? There are all sorts of people at Homburg; and you look very nice in your mourning. One does when one has a nice complexion. What will become of us if I have to bring you back here again?”

“I have no desire to be brought back,” said Millicent, sharply. “I am ready to do whatever I can;—you may see that. But fate seems against me somehow,” she added, putting up her hand to her eyes. “One had every reason to think it was settled and done with without any more trouble; and here is the treadmill just beginning again. You are pleased because you have got your money; but it is hard upon me all the same.”

“I believe you are in love with him, after all,” said the mother with profound scorn. Millicent did not make any direct answer; but she turned away indignantly, with a frown on her face. In love with him!—no, not so foolish as that; but still it was hard when you come to think of it,—never to be any nearer the end,—just to have to begin again. And when everything seemed so clear and easy! A hundred pounds was very nice, but it was not equal to Renton Manor and a house in Berkeley Square, and everything

that heart could desire. Poor Millicent sighed,—she could not help it. And he was so fond of her too, poor fellow! It seemed breaking faith with him to take his money and go off to Germany to marry somebody else upon the strength of it. And it was nice to have him always there,—ready, on the shortest notice, to come and worship. “All because I am rather pretty!” Millicent said to herself, with that half scorn with which a woman recognises that it is the least part of her that is loved. Her beauty was everything she had in the world, and yet it was a little strange that that was all Ben Renton could see in her. Her transparent scheming,—her hungry poverty,—her readiness to marry him or any man who had money enough, and asked her,—that all this should be glozed over and hidden by a pair of pretty eyes! This is a weakness of which a great many women take advantage, but which always fills them with a certain contempt. Millicent, who might have had something better in her, and who could have been fond of Ben had he not been disinherited, saw his folly with a half-disdain. No woman would have been such a fool as that! And yet she could not bear to hear her mother call him a fool.

She got up immediately, however, to begin her packing; and then she took into very serious consideration the question whether a new dress was not absolutely necessary for the new campaign,—a thin dress which she could wear over her old black silk, and which would look “dressed” at a table-d’hôte or other public place. “Don’t you think grenadine would be best?” she asked her mother, anxiously,—“or perhaps my white with black ribbons?” Whatever might be her feelings towards Ben Renton, it was evident there was no time to be lost.

“It must be black,” said Mrs. Tracy, decisively, “when you can have so few dresses. White is always the next step to colours, and we can’t afford that,—not to speak of washing. Black grenadine wears very well, and looks very nice,—on you, at least,” Mrs. Tracy added, with a stifled sigh. She was too old for grenadine herself. To play her part aright, she wanted a rich black silk becoming her years. But it would make such a hole in the hundred pounds! She was compelled to give that up. They spent the evening with the room littered all over with “things,” examining into their deficiencies,—two warriors setting out for the battle, and looking to all the crevices of their armour. And Ben down-stairs heard their soft, womanly footsteps thrill the floor over his head, and strained his ears to catch every movement they made. They seemed to have accepted his offering;—what were they going to do with himself? He sat, sick at heart, and listened while they went to and fro up-stairs to their sleeping-rooms, down again to the drawing-room. He had put his door ajar, and heard everything. Sometimes her mother called “Millicent!” from below; sometimes it was the sweeter voice of the daughter that replied; and every word rang through his heart, poor

fellow ! as he sat and listened. That there was a commotion of some sort going on up-stairs was certain ; and it was he who was the cause of it ; and yet they did not call him to share the excitement. Or were they, perhaps, preparing to go away, to punish him for his presumption,—to return him his impudent gift of money, and reject his friendship ? Poor Ben sat trembling, absorbed in a cruel fever of suspense all the evening. Perhaps they had meant him to be so,—perhaps it was only carelessness, their own suspense being over ; but certain it is that Mrs. Tracy's answer to his letter was not put into Ben's hands till the movement up-stairs was quieted, and the ladies preparing to go to bed. Then Mrs. Tracy rang the bell. "That poor boy has not got his answer yet,—how careless, Millicent !" she said ; and Millicent half smiled as she went and sought it on the writing-table, underneath a heap of muslin. "It can't matter much," she said, with a slight shrug of her graceful shoulders, and yet gave it with her own hands to the maid. "Tell Mr. Renton you forgot it," said Mrs. Tracy ; "it should have gone to him some time ago." And this was how the evening ended for the adventurers on the eve of their campaign.

It had been a trying day for Millicent. Thinking it over when she finally retired to the little dressing-room she occupied, this was the conclusion she came to,—a very trying day. Neither her education nor her experience, such as it was, had at all prepared her for such trials. She knew how to deal with the ordinary young man who was to be met with in Guildford Street ; and as she sat with her hair hanging about her shoulders, in the thoughtfulness of the moment a whole array rose up before her of men who had admired her, followed her about, and satisfied her vanity to the fullest extent, but who were not to be compared to Ben Renton in any particular. Millicent, knowing no better, would have married young Mr. Cholmley, of the firm of Cholmley and Territ, if he could have settled anything on her ; or young Hurlstone, the solicitor, if he had been in better practice ; or the engineer, who everybody said was likely to make so much money, had he not been so impudent about mothers-in-law, and so determined that Mrs. Tracy should have nothing to do in his house. She would have taken any of them, and thought it her duty. She had been even,—must it be confessed?—a quarter part engaged to all of them before their shortcomings were apparent. And each in succession was eager to have purchased her and her beauty, though they all haggled about the price. But to have betrayed her poverty to them, or her mother's difficulties, was the last thing in the world that Millicent would have dreamed of doing. Had she done so her lovers would have regarded her,—she knew it,—with a certain contempt. Her beauty was much, and that she was an officer's daughter, and supposed to have high connections, was much too,—enough to cover the want of fortune which she never attempted to conceal ; but penniless,

struggling with poverty, in debt—oh, words of fear!—Millicent would have starved rather than have breathed such damning syllables in the ears of Cholmley or Hurlstone. But she had told Ben all, “as if he were a friend,” she said to herself in amazement. And Ben, still as if he were a friend, had rushed forth and found what she wanted, letting no grass grow under his feet. What a curious, bewildering, unaccountable business it was! Poor fellow! Could he be a fool, as Mrs. Tracy thought? or was he more infatuated, more wild about her than any of them had been? or was it a new species she had to deal with,—a being of a different kind? She was so puzzled that she let her hair stray all over her shoulders and get into hopeless tangles. Poor Ben! And after all it was out of the question that she should marry him. This hundred pounds which he had thrust upon her,—and surely, surely if he were not a fool he must be a very indiscreet, prodigal sort of young man, throwing his money about in such a wild way,—must be the end, as it was the beginning, of anything between them. It was very hard, Millicent thought; but for that horrid old Mr. Renton and his ridiculous will, instead of setting out on her adventures to Homburg, in the hope of finding somebody to marry her, she might have had Ben and the Manor and excellent settlements, and no more trouble. Old men should not be allowed to be so wicked, she said to herself. She would have made Ben a very good wife; she would even have grown fond of him. A sigh trembled out of Millicent’s rose lips as these thoughts filled her soul. What a hair’s breadth it was that divided this shifty, tricky, sordid life, with its most miserable aim, from an existence so different! Berkeley Square,—that was, alas! the foremost thing in her thoughts. Her mind strayed off to caress the idea for a moment. She saw herself in the great old-fashioned, splendid rooms,—splendid to Mrs. Tracy’s daughter, and not old-fashioned, you may be sure of that, from the moment Mrs. Benedict Renton had got possession of them. She saw herself getting into her carriage at the door, with such horses, such footmen, such a glimmer and sheen of luxury, and sighed again very heavily. Last night it seemed so near, so certain; and now, the old treadmill to begin again, the old game to be played, the old risks to be run! It had not occurred to Millicent even now how humiliating was that game. It was natural to her;—she had been brought up to it. But she doubled the beautiful, soft, white hand which Ben had kissed, and shook it figuratively at his horrid old father. “Wretched old miser!” said Millicent, setting her pearly teeth together. And she could have made a good wife, and even grown fond of Ben.

Mrs. Tracy, on the other side of the partition, was not half so much disturbed. She had a hundred pounds in her pocket, as good as a gift, she said to herself; for, of course, he would never ask either interest or principal. What a fool the young man must be! or did

he, could he, think that she was such a fool as to throw away her beautiful daughter upon him because of his hundred pounds? Not quite so silly as that, Mrs. Tracy said to herself. It was the first real bit of good fortune her beautiful daughter had brought her. For husband-hunting, adopted as a profession in the very serious way in which Mrs. Tracy had entered into it, is a dangerous and difficult trade. Perhaps it would be safe to say there is no work in the world more hazardous, dreary, and unremunerative. Millicent's dresses had cost a great deal, and it had been very expensive taking her "out," before poor Fitzgerald's downfall and death made that impossible, and on the whole she had lost a great deal more than she had gained up to this moment. Now, here was the first earnest of coming fortune. With her looks Millicent might marry anybody;—a Russian prince rolling in money, most likely; or a millionaire with more than he could count. The world was at her feet. Notwithstanding the small results her beauty had produced in the past, Mrs. Tracy jumped to the highest heights of hope. And as for Ben Renton and his hundred pounds! instead of regretting, like her daughter, she was rather glad that the game was still all to play. The excitement had its charm for her. She was a gambler going about the world with one piece to stake; and, like most gamblers, could not divest herself of the idea that if she could but wait and hold on, she must win.

CHAPTER IX

BEN'S REWARD.

WHEN Ben received Mrs. Tracy's letter his mind was in a condition which it would be very difficult to describe. He had taken, as he thought, a step which would decide his whole life. And even in the moment of taking it he had been put to the severest test which a man can meet;—his love had been suddenly arrested in its high tide, and the woman he loved placed, as it were, at the bar before his better judgment, his finer taste. The shock had been so great that Ben's mind for the moment had reeled under it. He had felt equal to nothing but wild and sudden action, it did not matter much of what kind. He had rushed out and had done what we have already recorded, and now for two or three hours he had been sitting with no pretence at doing anything, waiting to see what was to come of it. Wild visions of being called to her,—of being made to forget in the charm and intoxication of her presence all the tinglings of shame and disquietude which against his will had come upon him,—possessed him at first. He sat for long, expecting that every movement he heard was towards him,—expecting to hear her voice, or her mother's voice, calling him. He could not go out to his club for dinner as he generally did; he could not have eaten anything; he did not even

recollect that it was his duty to go and dine. Such a madness to have taken possession of Ben Renton, a practised man of the world! But so it was. He sat and listened, thinking he heard her on the stair, thinking he heard soft taps at the door, saying sometimes, "Come in!" in his foolishness, to the ghost of his own fancy. But nobody came near him. One would have thought that this want of any response after the great sacrifice he had made for her, would have acted upon him like a shrill gust of reality blowing away the mists. But, in fact, it was not so. Instead of opening his eyes it but dimmed them more with a feverish haze of suspense. How could he judge her when he was watching with breathless anxiety for her call, for her answer, for some message from her? The footsteps above him were treading lightly, cruelly on his heart; but the very continuance of their sound rapt him so that he could think of nothing else. What were they doing? What meaning had they towards himself, these women who seemed to hold his life in their hands? Every lingering moment in which the true state of affairs should have become visible to him, in which he should have come to see, however unwilling, something of the real character of the creature that had bewitched him, encircled Ben with but another coil of her magic. Not now!—not now! After he knew what she was going to do he might then be able to judge. At present he could but listen, breathless,—watch, wait, wonder, and catch with a quickened ear the meaning of every movement. Any rational observer would have concluded that Ben Renton was out of his wits before, but the climax of his madness was reached that night. He had stripped himself of everything he had in the world,—at the moment,—for Millicent; he would have spent his life for her if she had but made him a sign; not in the way of self-murder, which nobody could have required of him, but of that more total suicide which consists in the sacrifice of all the prospects, and hopes, and possibilities of life. His love was not a selfish, complacent impulse, but a passion which mastered him. Thus the moments which passed so lightly overhead in that argument about the black grenadine were ages of sickening uncertainty to Ben.

This was brought to an end by Mrs. Tracy's letter. Such a plunge into dead fact after the wild heat of his excitement was enough to have brought any man to his wits. He read it over and over in his consternation. At first there shot across him a pang of disappointment, a sinking of heart, such as comes inevitably to those who are thrown back upon themselves out of a roused state of expectation. And then he re-read it till the words lost their meaning. But there was something else which could not fail of expressiveness, and that was the silence which had succeeded so much movement and commotion up-stairs. For half an hour he refused to believe, even with the sudden stillness above and the letter in his hand to prove it, that all possibility of further intercourse was over for the night. He could

not believe it. They were only stiller than usual. The note should have come to him earlier. There was still time to call him to them. He took out his watch and placed it on the table before him. Eleven o'clock, and everything so quiet. Then he went out and listened in the dingy little hall, where a faint lamp was burning; then, half mad, opened the outer door, and rushed into the street to make sure. There, indeed, he was convinced of the fact which had been evident to all his faculties before. The dining-room was quite dark, evidently vacant, and above, in the higher storey, was the glimmer of Mrs. Tracy's candles. She was going to bed, respectable, virtuous woman that she was, with the hundred pounds accepted as a loan under her pillow, too virtuous to think of rewarding the giver even by a smile from Millicent's lips, which would have cost nothing. The poor young fellow came in with his heart bleeding and palpitating, one knows how, and then seized his hat and went out again for a long, agitated walk in the dark, not caring nor knowing where he went. Yes; this was how it was to be. They had accepted his offering, but they had not a word to give him, nor a look, nor a smile; nothing but the formal acknowledgment of his "kindness," and Mrs. Tracy's I. O. U.,—which was worth so much! Ben walked on and on through the dreary, half-lighted streets, thinking, he supposed; but he was not in the least thinking. He was but going over and over the fact that there was nothing for him that night, that all hope was over, that the exquisite moment he had been expecting,—and it was only now that he knew how he had been expecting it,—was not to be. When some long-desired and promised meeting has failed to take place, and the watcher, obstinately believing to the last, has to confess that the day is over, the possibility gone, that the hour is never to be won out of the hands of time,—then he or she knows how Ben felt. And most of us have had some experience of such feelings. Thrills came over him, as he walked, of wild suggestion,—how she might, after all, have stolen down-stairs to say the fault was not hers; how she might have tapped at his door after he was gone. Ah! no, never that! Millicent would never have done that. And it was over for to-night, absolutely over! A hot dew of mortification and disappointment forced itself into his eyes as he marched along, nobody seeing him. Those dark London streets, wet pavements, gleams of dreary lamplight, miserable creatures here and there huddled up at corners, here and there loud in miserable gaiety, danced before his eyes, a kind of grey phantasmagoria. What had he done? what was he doing? What would life be with all its inconceivable chances missed, and the golden moments gone away into darkness like this? For the moment Ben was ready to have recognised the claim of fellowship with the most pitiable wreck upon that stony strand. Like every real pang of the heart, his sudden ache went beyond its momentary cause. It struck out from that small misery,—as

anybody in their senses would have thought it,—into the wide ocean of suffering beyond. The thrill that shook his being cast off echoes into the awful depths around him, of which he was but vaguely conscious. Such fooling,—because a young man had been disappointed of an hour's talk with his love! But these fantastic pangs are not the least sharp that humanity has to bear, though even the sufferer may get to smile at them afterwards; and any pain, if it is keen enough, brings the sufferer into the comprehension of pain; just as nature, it is said, makes the whole world kin. He walked for hours, forgetful of the poor maid of all-work in No. 10, Guildford Street, who was nodding with her head against the wall, and her arms wrapped up in her apron, waiting up for his return; and yet during all this time not one rational thought about the real position of Millicent Tracy and her mother, not one sensible reflection about his lost money, presented themselves to the young man's mind. He had not seen her, could not see her now till the morning of another day,—most probably was going to lose her altogether. Such were the vain things that occupied his thoughts.

Next morning, however, Ben was desperate. The day went on till past its height and no further notice was taken of him,—perhaps intentionally, perhaps only because the ladies were packing, and had no time for visitors. When he could stand it no longer he went boldly up-stairs, and knocked at their door. To tell the truth, they had forgotten him,—even Millicent had forgotten him, having given him but too much of her thoughts the night before, and exhausted the subject. They were in full discussion of the black grenadine when he went to the door, and bade him "Come in," calmly, expecting the maid, or the landlady, or some other unimportant visitor. "I must have something decent for evenings," Millicent was saying, with quiet decision, absorbed in her subject, and not thinking it worth while to raise her eyes; and then, suddenly feeling a presence of some sort in the room, she started and looked up, and gave a little scream. "Oh! it is Mr. Renton, mamma!" she said, with sudden bewilderment. She had thought he could be kept off,—kept at arm's-length,—and she had forgotten the important part he played in all this preparation, and the new start which was coming. She dropped her work, and her hands trembled a little. "Mr. Renton!" There was dissatisfaction, annoyance, surprise, in every inflection of her tone.

"How glad I am to see you so early!" said Mrs. Tracy, with the "tact" which distinguished her, rising and coming up to him with outstretched hands. She gave her daughter a reproving glance, which was not lost upon poor Ben. "Do come in. We had hoped to see you this evening; but this is quite an unlooked-for pleasure. You gentlemen are generally so much engaged in the day."

"I have not much to engage me," said Ben; and then he stopped

short, with his heart aching, and gave a piteous look at Millicent, who was not paying the least attention to him. "If I have come too soon," he said, "let me return in the evening. I did not mean to disturb you."

"You could not disturb us," said Mrs. Tracy, with her most gracious smile. "If Millicent is too busy to talk, she shall go away and look after her chiffons, and come back to us when her mind is at rest. As we are going so soon, I shall be very glad of a little talk with our kindest friend."

"Oh, very well, mamma," said Millicent; and she got up, with no softening of her looks. She was vexed that he had come; yet vexed to go away and leave him with her mother,—vexed to see him, with a feeling of doing him wrong, with which Mrs. Tracy's obtuse faculties were not troubled. She swept out of the room without so much as looking at him, and then stood outside, with a thousand minds to go back. She was not callous, nor cruel, nor without heart, though she had been brought up to one debasing trade. If she had never seen him after, it would have made the whole matter practicable; but to know all he had done, and why he had done it; to see the love,—such love!—in his eyes; and to be obliged to be polite and grateful, and no more! Nature rebelled to such an extent in the young woman's mind that it woke her to sudden alarm! Could she be falling in love with Ben? as her mother said. When that absurd idea entered her thoughts she turned quickly away, and ran up-stairs to her room, and went to her packing, leaving her mother to deal with him. No, not quite;—not so ridiculous as that!

"Have I offended her?" said Ben. "Is she angry with me for my—presumption? What have I done to make her go away?"

"Nothing, my dear friend," said Mrs. Tracy, taking his hand, and pressing it; "nothing but the kindest, the noblest action. Oh, Mr. Renton, you must not be hard upon my poor child! She feels your generosity so much, and she feels our miserable position so much,—and, in short, it is a conflict of pride and gratitude——"

"Gratitude!" said Ben, sadly. "Ah, how ill you judge me;—as if I wanted gratitude! I wish I had wealth to pour at her feet. I wish I could give her——. But that is folly. Has she not a word to say to me, after all?"

What he meant by "after all," was, after the opening of his heart,—after the pouring forth of his love. But to Mrs. Tracy it meant after the hundred pounds; and here was a way of making an end of him very ready to her hands.

"Mr. Renton," she said, with an assumption of dignity which sat very well, and looked natural enough, "it was my doing, accepting it,—it was not Millicent's doing. I thought it was offered out of kindness and friendship. Any one, almost, would pity two women left alone as we were; and I accepted it, as I thought, in the spirit it was offered; but if I had thought it was a price for my child's affections——."

Ben turned away, sickening at her, as she spoke to him. "Bah!" he said, half aloud in his disgust. He would not condescend to explain. He turned half round to the door, and gazed at it in an uncertain pause. Millicent might come back. When he thought of it, mothers were,—or books were liars,—all miserable, bargaining creatures like this. He would not take the trouble to discuss it with her. If he had not been so weary and worn-out and sick at heart he would not have been thus uncivil. But he said to himself that he could not help it, and turned impatiently away.

"Ah! I thought it was not so,—I felt sure it was not so!" cried Mrs. Tracy, recovering herself as her mistake became apparent. "Dear Mr. Renton, sit down, and let us talk it over. Forgive a mother's jealous care. But let me thank you first——"

"I don't want any thanks," said Ben, with a certain sullenness, as he sat down at her bidding on the nearest chair.

"For my life," said Mrs. Tracy, looking him calmly in the face. "Yes, it was as serious as that. Not that I care much for my life, except for Millicent's sake. It has no more charms nor hopes for me, Mr. Renton! But I could not die until I see her in better hands than mine. Don't be angry with me. You asked her,—you offered her—— What was it, in reality, that passed between you yesterday? My darling child was too much agitated to know."

"I had nothing to offer," said Ben, with sullen disgust. To pour out his heart to Millicent, and to make his confession thus to her mother, were two very different things. "I am penniless, and disinherited. I had to tell her so. Nothing but what I might be able to make as a day-labourer, perhaps," he went on, with angry vehemence. "Whatever folly I said, she has apparently no answer to give."

"In such a case, Mr. Renton," said Mrs. Tracy, facing him, "it is not my daughter who has to be consulted, but me." He had given her an advantage by his ill-breeding, and now he had to rouse himself, and turn round to her and mutter some prayer for pardon. He was in the wrong. As this flashed upon him his colour rose. Had he spoken as he now said he had it would have been an insult. It was an insult, the way in which he was addressing her mother now. "Mr. Renton," she said, "I have put myself into a false position by taking your money; and what is life itself in comparison with one's true character? I cannot let you despise Millicent's mother. Here it is; you shall have it back."

"Mrs. Tracy, forgive me, for heaven's sake! I did not know what I was saying," cried Ben.

"There it is," said his opponent, laying the pocket-book on the table between them. "Now I can speak. Millicent is an innocent girl, Mr. Renton. She is not one of the kind who fall in love without being asked. Probably, now that she knows you love her, she might learn to love you if you were thrown together. But after the

honourable way in which you have told me what your position is, I cannot permit that. I will speak to you quite frankly. If things had been different I should have been on your side; but I cannot let my child marry a man with nothing. She is too sensitive, too finely organised, too,—I cannot suffer it, Mr. Renton. That is the honest truth. We are going away, and you may not meet again, perhaps."

"That is impossible," said Ben, with a firmness of resolution which made her pause in her speech. He spoke so low that it might have been to himself, but she heard it, and it startled her much.

"I will not let her marry a poor man," cried Mrs. Tracy with the violence of alarm, "whatever comes of it. She is not a girl who may marry anybody! She must make a good marriage. She must have comfort. She must have what she has been used to," the woman cried in agitation, with a certain gloomy irony. She was afraid of him, not knowing that he might not put his hand across the table, and clutch his money back.

"Good; I will work for that," said Ben. "She shall have it. It is only a question of time. What more? What do you want more?"

"What do I want?" cried Mrs. Tracy, "Is that how you speak to a lady, Mr. Renton? I want a great deal more. I want position and respect for my Millicent, and civility, at least, for myself."

Ben got up and went and made a gloomy survey of the room, round and round, after the fashion of men, and then he came back to the point he had started from. "I did not mean to be rude," he said; "I beg your pardon. I have spoken to you like an ass. I feel I have; but it is you who have the better of me. Put away that rubbish, for heaven's sake, if you would not drive me mad! I don't suppose she cares for me,—how should she? I'll go to work and take myself out of the way to-morrow. Only promise me to wait, —wait till you see how I get on. You can't tell what progress I may make. If I do well you have nothing against me. You said so this minute. Wait and see."

"And let my child sacrifice her youth,—for what?" cried Mrs. Tracy. "Oh, my dear Mr. Renton, things are harder than you think! You don't know what you say."

"Perhaps I don't," said Ben; "perhaps I do. Neither of us know. Give me your word to this, at least,—that nothing shall be done without telling me; nothing shall happen before I know."

"Oh, what am I to do?" said Mrs. Tracy. "How can I make such an engagement? As if I should be sure to know even before—anything happened! I will do what I can. You know I wish you well."

"You will promise to let me know before—you bind her to any other," Ben repeated, bending over the little table which stood between them, to look into her face. She thought it was to take up

the famous pocket-book upon which everything depended, and uttered a little scream.

"I will do whatever I can," she said. "I will plead your cause all I can. I will promise,—oh, yes! Mr. Renton, I promise," she cried, eagerly. He had even, as he stooped towards her, touched the price,—as she thought,—of the promise with his sleeve.

And then, utterly to Mrs. Tracy's bewilderment, Ben dropped into his chair, and covered his face with his hands, and sighed. The sigh was so deep and heavy and full of care that it startled her. Had he not just got what he had been struggling for? She had given him her promise,—a reluctant and perhaps not very certain bond,—and yet he gave but a sigh over it,—the sigh of a man ruined and broken. She looked at his bowed head, at the curious strain of the hands into which his face was bent. What a strange, unsatisfactory, ungracious way of receiving a favour! What a highdown, exaggerated sort of a young man! She was thinking so, gazing across the table at him, sometimes letting her eye stray a little anxiously to the pocket-book, with a pucker in her forehead and a cold dread in her heart, when the unaccountable fellow as suddenly unveiled his cloudy countenance and looked straight up into her face. Probably he caught her glance retreating from the pocket-book, for he laughed, and all at once, to her amaze and consternation, took that up.

"You must take care of your health," he said,—and whether he was speaking in mockery or in kindness Mrs. Tracy could not make out,—“and when this is done let me know,” he added, dropping it softly without any warning into her lap. “I may be rich by that time; and when I am rich, you know, you are to be on my side.”

“Oh, my dear, I am on your side now!” she cried, with a half-sob, and stretched out to take his hand, and would have kissed it, in the relief of getting what she wanted. She did not understand the glow of shame that came over Ben's face, the stern clasp he gave to her hand, almost hurting her, resisting her soft attempt to draw it to her. And he held her thus, as in a vice, and looked down upon her stormily, keenly, as if asking himself whether he could believe her or not. “And I will see her, too, before you go,” he said, with an abruptness she had never seen in him before; and then suddenly left her, without another word, closing the door behind him, and audibly, with heavy, rude footsteps, descending the stairs.

Mrs. Tracy sat motionless, with her fingers all white and crumpled together, and the pocket-book lying in her lap, and heard the street-door shut behind him, and his steps echo along the street. Then only did she draw breath. It had been a tough moment, but she could flatter herself she had won the victory. And yet she had a cry to herself, as she sat alone awaking out of her stupefaction. What a brute he was! Her fingers were crushed, her nerves quite shaken. But then she had the hundred pounds in her lap, and had given

only the vaguest general promise by way of paying for it,—a promise which might be forgotten or not as it should happen when there were a thousand miles of land and water between the two.

"Of course I shall see him," Millicent said, when she came downstairs and heard a kind of report of the interview,—a very partial report given to suit the exigencies of the moment. "I would not be so ungrateful," she said; and there was a little flutter of colour and light about her, which looked like excitement, the anxious mother thought. Could she be such a fool as to have fallen in love with him? was the painful idea which flashed again across Mrs. Tracy's mind. Surely, surely, not anything so ridiculous as that. And the best thing in the circumstances was to fall back upon the black grenadine, which indeed was a matter of the first importance. It was not quite so pretty as tulle, nor so light; but then it would be cheaper and wear better, and at those summer dinners in daylight, which are always so trying, would probably look even better than tulle. "It must be put in hand at once," Mrs. Tracy said, "for we have no time to lose." And it was a great relief to her when Millicent settled down quietly to try a new trimming, which she thought would be pretty for the sleeve. After all, she was a very good girl, with no nonsense about her; and her mother's blessing, could it have secured her the best reward a good girl can have,—the conventional reward for all exemplary young women,—fell upon Millicent on the spot. A good husband, a rich husband,—a very rich, very grand, very noble mate; if that were but attained what more could the round world give? Mrs. Tracy went and locked up her pocket-book, and got through an endless amount of arrangements that very afternoon. She had been in haste before, but now she was in a hurry. It occurred to her even that it would be better to get the black grenadine in Paris, though it might be a little dearer. Anything rather than another such interview! On that point her mind was made up.

CHAPTER X.

THE LAST INTERVIEW.

MOTHERS were like that,—calculating, merchandizing creatures, not worthy to unloose the shoes of the fair and innocent angels who, by some strange chance, were in their hands,—sordid beings whom it was just, and even virtuous, to balk and deceive. If this were not the case, then most books were false, and most sketches of contemporary life founded on a mistake. Ben Renton was not more given to novels than most men, but if there is one fact to be learned from the best studies of the best humorists, is it not this? And there was much comfort in the thought. It stopped him short in the course of disenchantment, which otherwise would have wrung his

heart cruelly, and perhaps convinced him. She was not to blame. She had opened her heart to him, poor darling!—she could not help it. And now she was separated from him by an agony of embarrassment and shame, his money standing like a ghost between him,—who had thought of nothing but of serving her on his knees, like her slave,—and her delicacy, her pride, the revulsion of all her fine and tender instincts against the burden of such a vulgar obligation! This was how he managed to free himself from all doubts of Millicent. Her mother it was clear was a mercenary, poverty-stricken, scheming, sordid “campaigner,”—but then most mothers are so;—and she herself was as spotless as she was lovely,—the soul of tender honour, the ideal and purest type of woman. God bless her! he said in his heart. Even the cloud he had seen on her face endeared her more to him. And if it should be his to deliver this noble creature from her mean surroundings, to take her from the society of the poor mercenary mother, to enrich her with everything that was fair and honest, and of good report! Ben’s foot spurned the ground as this anticipation came upon him. He felt himself able to conquer everything, thrilling with the strength of a hundred men. Who said it was hard? If it were not hard it would be too sweet, too delicious, the day’s work of Paradise amid the yielding roses and golden apples, not bitter sweat of the brow and mortal toil.

Two or three days passed, however, before the interview he had determined upon, and to which Millicent assented as a matter of course, could come to pass. Mrs. Tracy staved it off with an alarm which was partly selfish and partly affectionate. Her own conversation with Ben had been of a character quite unprecedented in her experience, and had taken, as she admitted, a great deal out of her; and she was reluctant to expose her daughter to a similar experience. And then Millicent was still young, and there had been curious signs about her for some time back,—signs of something unknown, which her mother was afraid of. Such things had been heard of as that a girl, even in circumstances as important as Millicent’s, with everything, so to speak, hanging upon her decision, and a good marriage the one thing indispensable in the world, should cheat all her friends and ruin her own hopes by falling in love with an objectionable suitor. Mrs. Tracy almost blushed at the thought; but still, as an experienced woman, she could not shut her eyes to the possibility. And Millicent certainly was not quite like herself. Sometimes she could not bear to hear Ben Renton’s name; but again, if he were spoken slightly of, would flash up. And she was cross and uneasy and restless, exacting about the grenadine and the little things she wanted,—not easy to manage in any way. It might be dangerous to leave them alone together. For these very different reasons Mrs. Tracy exercised all her diplomatic skill to delay, and, if possible, put off altogether, this

unlucky interview. And in the meantime all the boxes were packed, and such of the tradespeople as she could not help paying were paid. A hundred pounds is not a very large sum of money after all. She took care to point out to the landlady that she was only going for the baths, and might be expected back again, so that people were not so very sharp about their accounts as perhaps they might have been. And she went so far as to leave her superfluous luggage in Guildford Street,—an unmistakable sign of probity. If the end of all their schemes were attained in Homburg, why then there would,—no doubt,—be money for everything; and, if not, why it was no use burning their ships until they saw how things would go. It was on the last evening that Ben found his way to the drawing-room with a smouldering fire of excitement in his heart. Not all Mrs. Tracy's skill could balk him of that last gratification; but she had succeeded in postponing it to the last night.

Millicent was seated where she had been the first time he saw her,—where she had been on that memorable day when she told him their need,—on a low, straight-backed chair in the corner, against the wall, with the light coming in on her from under the half-lowered blind. She was innocent of any consciousness of that perfection of effect. The blind was down only because Mrs. Tracy felt that it looked well from the outside, neither of them being sufficiently skilled to know how cleverly this device concentrated the light upon the beautiful head. She had some work in her hands, as usual, by way of relief and refuge in what was likely to be an agitating interview. And yet Millicent did not look much as if she should herself be agitated. Her lips were drawn in the least in the world; her forehead had the ghost of a line on it; her foot patted in soft impatience upon the carpet. She was anxious, very anxious, to have it over. What was the use of talk? She was ready to see him, ready to please him so far as she could, and yet she could not but be irritated with the man who had disappointed her,—could not but feel that his hundred pounds was a very paltry substitute for what she had expected of him. Millicent was not beginning her new campaign with any very brilliant hopes. She was ready, even now, to cry with vexation and disappointment. She never had brought a man to the point and felt that she could put up with him, and might have a comfortable life before her, but he went and got himself disinherited! It was all very well for the others, who had no particular trouble in the matter; and nobody sympathised sufficiently with Millicent to see that the very sight of him was tantalizing to her, now that he was no good! At the same time, she was used to commanding herself, and did not betray these emotions. Ben went into the room with the noiseless rapidity of passion. She did not know he was coming until he was there, leaning against the window, gazing down upon her. Mrs.

Tracy was out of the room, though she had not meant to be so. He had seized upon the moment, determined, at least for this once, to have everything his own way.

"Oh, Mr. Renton, how you startled me!" said Millicent. "I never heard you come up-stairs."

"I did not mean you should," said Ben. He had come up very wild in his passion, with a hundred violent, tender words on his lips to say; but when he came before her, and gazed down on her passionless face, somehow the fire went out of him. A kind of wonder stole over his mind,—a wonder not unusual to men before such a woman. Was it anything to her at all,—anything out of the ordinary way? The meeting, the parting,—which shook his very being,—was it merely an every-day incident with her, saying, "Good-bye to poor Mr. Renton?" He stood and gazed, with his heart in his eyes, at the calm creature. The very marble warms a little on its surface, at least, under the shining of the sun. When she raised her lovely eyes to him,—undimmed, unbrightened, no haze of feeling nor sparkle of excitement in them,—shining calmly, as they always did, a sense of half adoration, half scorn awoke in Ben's mind. Was she chiller than the marble, then? Or was not this passionless sweetness of the woman, before the fiery love which blazed about her, a something half divine? "You do not care much," he said. "I was a fool to think you would care; and yet I have been counting the moments till this moment should come."

"It is very kind of you to think so much of me," said Millicent; "and I did want to see you, Mr. Renton. I wanted to tell you that I never for one moment thought,—never imagined you would do anything, like what you have done. I should not have told you, had I thought so; I should have died sooner."

"Oh, Millicent! is this all you have to say to me?" cried her lover. "I wish it was at the bottom of the sea;—I wish—Never mind. Think for one moment, if you can, that I have never done anything—except—love you. That does not sound much," the young man went on, stooping down, almost kneeling before her, that his eyes might help his words. A smile of half disdain at himself broke over his face as he caught her eye. "It does not sound much," he cried. "You will say to yourself, small thanks to him,—everybody does that; but it is everything in the world to me. Have you nothing to say to me for that, Millicent?—not one word?"

"It is very kind of you. You are very good,—you always were very good to me," said Millicent hurriedly under her breath, with a glance at the door. Undoubtedly, Mrs. Tracy's presence would have been a relief now.

"Kind!" he cried, with a sort of groan,—"*good to you!* Then that is all I am to have by way of farewell?"

"Mr. Renton," said Millicent, rousing herself up, "I don't know

what you think I can say. You know what you told me last time we spoke of this. You said you were disinherited. You said you had nothing to offer me. Well, then, what can I answer? It is very good of you to,—care for me. I shall always feel you have done me an honour. But there is nothing to give an answer to that I know of; and, indeed, I can't tell what else to say."

"Ah, if it is only that there is nothing to answer!" cried Ben. "Millicent, tell me I am to work for you,—tell me that when I have changed all this,—when I have made my way in the world,—when I have something to offer,—that I am to come back to you. Tell me so,—only that I am to come!"

With a little laugh, half of natural embarrassment, half of art, Millicent glanced at, and turned away from, her lover, who was now fairly on his knees before her, looking up with eager, pleading, impassioned eyes into her face. "That would be very like making you an offer," she said, shaking her head. "You cannot expect me to do that."

"But I may come?" said Ben. He took her calm, soft hands into his, which burned and trembled. He kissed them with his quivering, passionate lips. Oh, what a fool he was! That was the uppermost thought in the mind of the beautiful creature at whose feet he thus threw himself. A man of the world, too, who ought to have seen through her,—who ought to have known that she was not the sort of woman to wait years and years on such a vague, nay, hopeless prospect. Yes, he might come if he liked. What did it matter? If he was to make his own way in the world, no doubt it would be years and years first, and by that time his feelings would have changed, of course. It was easier to pretend to yield to him, and satisfy him for the moment, than to set the truth plainly before him and make a scene. Thus Millicent reasoned, not without compassion, not without kindness, for the foolish fellow who held her hands in such a tremulous, passionate embrace. There lay the special hardness of her fate. She could have liked him had everything been as it ought to be. She was sorry for him even now; but, after all, what did it matter? It must be years and years before he could have anything to offer, and of course his feelings would have changed a dozen times before that. It was best to smooth over matters, and make him happy now. Thus Ben came off victorious from both mother and daughter,—victorious,—conqueror of all real obstacles that could stand between him and his love. So he thought.

When he went down-stairs again he found the vulgarest little envelope on his table,—dirty, crumpled, with his name scrawled on it in a style he was quite familiar with,—his weekly bill,—and he had not anything to pay it with,—not a shilling in the world!

THE IRISH CHURCH BILL IN THE LORDS.

IN the rifle match the other day between the two Houses of Parliament, the Lords did not shoot very well and they were beaten. It was alleged as an excuse for their failure that they had lately been keeping late hours, and that consequently their hands were unsteady. We think that the excuse should be taken. They have been working hard, and have done much to prove that the sneers so commonly made against them as to idleness, apathy, and incapability, are unjust and groundless.

In regard to this accusation, indeed, the press, and the public also, are occasionally unfairly hard upon the House of Lords. Something is demanded from them more than they do, but what that something should be they who make the demand do not know. That legislation should be commenced in the House of Commons on almost all matters is one of the consequences of the shape which our constitution has taken. The House of Commons is the more numerous branch of Parliament; it naturally is the younger in the age of its members; it contains of necessity the greater proportion of the men who form the Government;—and, above all, it is the chamber which is immediately under the control of the people. The Lords must therefore wait for the Commons, and they do wait,—often very patiently. But it seems to us that when a piece of work is sent to them, they do it with sufficient energy; and that they certainly so do it as to show to all the world that they are not fairly liable to reproaches for indifference or incompetence. Whatever other result may come from what has been done during the last month by the Lords in regard to the Irish Church Bill, the spread of the opinion which we have ventured to express must we think be one result.

And when we look at the composition of the two Houses, at the aristocratic element of the Commons and at the plebeian proportion of the Lords, we cannot fail to see the mistake made by political teachers who would congratulate the country on the ability of its Commons, while they denounce the incapacity of the Lords.

The natural position of a young Lord,—of an unfledged peer,—is the House of Commons. If we look into the records of all our great noble families, we find that it is so. The young cadets of our great houses are the most popular candidates at our hustings, nor have they become less popular than heretofore under the operation of the household suffrage. This has become so much the rule of life among noble

families in England that a peer in the disposal of his son looks almost as a matter of course to a career for him as a commoner in the Lower House. And noblemen succeed there,—proportionably beyond other men,—because they begin their work young and are hampered by no demands on their time made by other professions. Who can remember a Cabinet in which has not sat the son of some peer as a commoner, a Hartington, a Stanley, a Seymour, or a Lincoln? In the course of nature these men become peers and take with them into the Upper House the education they have acquired in the Lower. To suppose that because they become Lords,—Lords in the legislative sense,—they therefore become fools, is, we think, to indulge a revolutionary passion at the expense of common sense. To quarrel with them because their energy is less prominent than it was heretofore, is to cast a censure upon the all-engrossing appetite for government of the House of Commons.

And if the Lower House be composed to a large degree of young noblemen, so is the Upper House revigorated from day to day with old commoners. Of the peers who spoke in the late debate, very nearly one-half had won their peerages for themselves; and of the hereditary peers who spoke, very nearly one-half had earned for themselves a parliamentary reputation in the House of Commons.

We insist upon this now not because we like the work that the Lords have just done,—which, however, we regard as work very natural for them to do,—but because we like the energy with which they did it. And we specially dislike that fouling of our own nest which is to a sad degree effected when our own leading men allow themselves to use expressions of contempt towards a branch of our legislature which is not only absolutely essential to our existing constitution, but which does, in fact, conduct itself with exemplary diligence and most patriotic zeal in discharge of its duties. We all know the class of arguments which is used against hereditary legislators, and how flagrant are the instances of men who, born to this high position, disgrace their rank by low vice and by egregious folly. Tales are told of this vice and folly in our own great colonies, in the United States, and all over Europe, which are easily understood and easily believed, and the argument against hereditary legislation seems to be complete. But vice and folly are more easily recognised than wisdom and patriotism, and, alas! have greater charms for the tongues of men and women. A duke who has wasted a princely patrimony in five years gives more subject for exciting conversation than an earl who has been thrice Prime Minister. That this duke or that marquis should have dissipated his patrimony will become matter of notoriety throughout all the nations, whereas the life's work of a man who had all means of pleasure at his command, but has been stirred to work by a high ambition, is for the moment disregarded. For every peer disgraced among us, we have ten peers who are, as it

were, the very salt of the earth for us. And, such is the constitution of our House of Lords, that it must be so. Our Upper Chamber is so constantly refreshed with new waters, that it cannot become a stagnant pool. Our commoner is so near to being a peer, and our peer was so lately a commoner, that it is fatuous to speak of differences between the capacity and the patriotism of the one and the other. We all regard our country as a coach which is destined to make progress. In matters of legislation, Public Opinion sits on the box. The House of Commons is the team of horses, and the House of Lords is the drag at the wheel. So excellently does the latter contrivance perform its part, that we go down all our hills with a safety unknown to other nations.

But this drag is sometimes felt to be vexatious by those who are in a hurry, and it has proved itself to be very vexatious on more than one occasion during the six days that it has been lately sitting in Committee on the Irish Church Bill. It must, however, be admitted at the same time that, in regard to its powers for debating, the House of Lords has shown itself to be equal to the occasion, and has far excelled the House of Commons in its efforts on the same subject. It may be pleaded no doubt on behalf of the Commons that that which was to be said by them had already been said on the hustings, and that the conclusion to be tried was, as regarded that House, too completely foregone to be capable of producing strong arguments or brilliant oratory. And it must be allowed, on the other hand, that the subject was for the Lords full of an overpowering interest created by a feeling, now for the first time becoming common in our history, that the Upper House is bound to act in concert with the expressed opinion of the country,—even though such action be in direct opposition to the individual opinions of a majority among themselves. That the House of Lords has so acted on various occasions, in passing the Reform Bill, in emancipating Roman Catholics, in repealing the Corn Law, and in abolishing Church Rates, is known both to Lords and commoners; but on these occasions their action has been produced by arguments used by their leaders as being special to the case in hand. Now at last it is admitted that if on any great question the opinion of the country be but adequately expressed, that opinion must and will govern the action of the House of Lords indirectly, as it does directly govern the action of the House of Commons. This acknowledgment on the part of the Lords, joined to the well-known and not unnatural distaste felt by a large majority of the peers to the disestablishment and disendowment of a State Church, has invested the subject for them with an interest which has enabled them to give to their countrymen the best possible proof of their ability to debate a great question in a great manner.

The operations of the Lords in regard to the Bill were commenced by what we may perhaps call a caucus meeting at the private house

of a great peer. The world was given to understand that the conservative majority of the Lords had there assembled, and had decided that the Bill should be thrown out on the second reading. We believe there is no doubt that such a decision was reached; and we believe also,—though we do not pretend to know or think that others know the secrets of cabinets,—that upon this decision of the Lords, Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues determined that, should the Bill be thrown out on the second reading, they would recommend the Queen to prorogue Parliament, would pass another Irish Church Bill before Christmas, and would summon the Lords from their country quarters in the late autumn to pronounce another verdict on the action of the Lower House. It may perhaps have been contemplated that, were things pressed to this point, something might be gained to the liberal party by the extreme disgust with which a conservative peer would receive the proposition of a sojourn in London during the months of October and November. Matters, indeed, have gone other ways than this; but the horrors of an autumn session have not even yet been escaped.

Gradually, during the ten days preceding the debate on the second reading, the belief of men as to the views of the Lords were changed; and doubtless the intention of many a peer was changed also. It was still understood that the new leader of the conservative party, Lord Cairns, and the old leader, Lord Derby, would vote against the second reading; and that they would speak against the Bill with that peculiar vehemence of political feeling for which they are both celebrated; but their followers were not constrained to follow them, and it began to be understood that the second reading might possibly be carried. Numbers were given by speculative and sanguine men. There would be a majority of five against the second reading;—then a majority of seven in its favour;—and so on. When the debate was really commenced there was a general impression that the peers would assent to a second reading of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. The debate was opened by Lord Granville with that easy, unoratorical, unargumentative, good-humoured, but gently satirical, common sense which has made Lord Granville what he is,—a statesman liked by all, feared by none, and to be beaten, either in debate or in the practical work of Government, by no statesman of the second class;—an incarnation of English sagacity and English good-humour, combined with an absence of scruple and pretension on political subjects which is so essentially parliamentary as to be worthy also of being called English. The chief point of interest in Lord Granville's speech was the promise made that amendments coming from the Lords should be considered in a spirit of conciliation by the Government. The opposite party had been able to carry no amendments of importance in the House of Commons; and it was perhaps well that Lord Granville should declare that something would be yielded.

Lord Harrowby, in compliance with the arranged tactics of the conservative peers, moved as an amendment that the Bill should be read that day three months, and then the lists were opened, and the fight was afoot.

We do not purpose to go through the debate which will have been so lately watched with eagerness by the majority of our readers, and the results of which are so well known. It was amusing to observe how gallantly the doctrine of no surrender was maintained by certain of the Lords, who regard themselves as appointed ever to perform the melancholy task of guarding citadels which they know must fall before the enemy. The Duke of Rutland told the House of Lords that nothing should induce him to vote for a Bill which would, he believed, strike out one of the Articles of the Union,—as though any Article of the Union could be a thing destined to a perpetuity of existence let what changes might take place around; and Lord Derby himself, on a later day, ended a brilliant speech by declaring that it would, to his dying day, be a satisfaction to him to have lifted up his voice against the adoption of a measure of which he believed that its political folly was only equalled by its moral turpitude! We confess to a certain pleasure in hearing these expressions of extreme pugnacity from men who feel themselves bound to fight to the last for a losing cause.

The debate on the second day was opened by Lord Grey,—putting down Lord Lytton, who had moved the adjournment on the previous night, and whom the world expected to hear,—by Lord Grey, a peer whom we all thoroughly respect, but one whose speeches are found most difficult to read and his arguments most difficult to follow. He is the very antipode of Lord Granville,—being hard, unpractical, scrupulous, and, if we may call him a statesman, as a statesman most unsatisfactory. During the first night the Bishop of Derry had spoken, and now after Lord Grey the Archbishop of Dublin gave utterance to wails, which were, we think, the most melancholy sounds uttered during the debate. He was the Philoctetes of the Bill, and told us that all was evil that would come from the measure if it were carried;—everybody concerned would be treated unjustly by it; no dissensions would be quelled, and new fountains of bitterness would be opened. Such notes of woe were to be expected, and should surprise us less than the speeches which followed them from the bishops' bench.

The arguments used by the Bishop of St. David's have perhaps done more than any other words spoken during the debate to raise its character, and at the same time to add to the reputation of a parliamentary chamber consisting in part of priests. It has been alleged by those who have most strenuously opposed the disendowment of the Church of Ireland, that the funds belonging to that Church could not be taken away and applied to other purposes without sacrilege;—that they were, in fact, God's funds, used for the propagation of

God's truth, and could not be averted from that use without an injury done by the nation to the majesty of the Almighty. To those who are not themselves subject to the superstition of such a belief this doctrine is horrible, not only as containing infinite falsehood, but as combining with that falsehood a confusion as to God's purposes with his creatures and man's mode of learning and submitting himself to those purposes, which is incompatible with clear light. That under such teaching men would be destined to grope in impenetrable darkness seems to be certain. But yet there has ever been the greatest difficulty in dispelling that confusion without shocking the pious and displaying something of irreverence in regard to things that are really holy. The Bishop of St. David's has been able to explain the course of reasoning by which he has been led to the conclusion that no material offerings are acceptable to the Almighty but those which are beneficial to man, and that they are acceptable in proportion as they are beneficial;—and so pellucid has been the course of his thinking on the matter, and so easy and well arranged his words, that he has succeeded in doing that which cannot be done by reason and logic alone, and which certainly cannot be effected by vehement oratory. He has made it intelligible to the intellect of the ordinary listener or reader that there can be no sacrilege in bringing the political power of a nation to bear on the manipulation of funds primarily intended for religious purposes.

Later in the same evening the Bishop of Peterborough made, we believe, his maiden speech as a peer, and has certainly taken by storm, not only the House of Lords, but the country, as an orator. We did not hear the speech, but in reading it we can understand how great must have been its effect. But we think that it contained as little of argument as any speech made during the debate. As the Archbishop of Dublin had been full of woe, so was his countryman and brother full of wrath. He assures us, "speaking entirely of things within his own knowledge,"—"that in the whole history of fiction there has been nothing to equal the persistent,—he might say the malignant,—exaggerations that have been circulated throughout England with respect to the Irish Church." "Time does not admit," he says, "of going through all the harsh and cruel details of the Bill." The bishop is astonished at "the injustice of the measure," but is still more surprised by "its shabbiness." "It is a small and pitiful Bill." The bishop tells us that the Bill violates the verdict of the nation, having before told us most emphatically that the opinion of the nation as expressed on the hustings should go for nothing. And he concludes his speech by saying, "I dare not, I cannot, I must not, and I will not vote for this most unhappy, this most ill-timed, this most ill-omened measure." The common fault of clergymen speaking in public is, that they are apt to carry with them the sense of irresponsibility which is conveyed to them by the security of the pulpit. They may there

say what they will of their opponents and no one can answer them. We do not believe that any liberal peer has as yet thought it worth his while to answer the Bishop of Peterborough; but it might have been easy to explain to him, had the doing so been at the moment worth the time, that the men by whom this measure has been initiated are the chosen ministers of the nation; and are as little likely to favour that which is malignant, cruel, harsh, unjust, shabby, small, pitiful, unhappy, ill-timed, and ill-omened as can be any Irish clergyman translated from an Irish to an English sphere of duty. Shabby, small, and pitiful are words which are especially disagreeable as applied to the statesmanship of the country; and when used by any member of Parliament will subject him who uses them to some scrutiny as to his education in the art of legislating.

Of Lord Derby's speech, opening the third night of the debate, we have already spoken. As might have been expected, Rupert will be Rupert to the last. In the course of his address he took occasion to assume the person of Meg Merrilies, and to address the Parliament and the people of England as she addressed the Laird of Ellangowan and his followers. The episode must have had its effect. As Godfrey Bertram had quenched the seven hearths of her people,—who would all have wanted bread ere he had wanted sunkets,—so are the Parliament and people of England about to put out the fires of those Protestant Irish clergymen, who out-herod Herod in their devotion to the Protestant Church. The story and its deduction were characteristic, picturesque, and forcible. But Lord Derby might have remembered that the great fault of the Laird of Ellangowan was in having allowed the seven hearths to be there at all. Ellangowan was too weak in his age to remedy the evil he had done in his youth without producing other evils. Let us hope that the British people may be stronger than Ellangowan.

Perhaps the most remarkable point in this debate has been the very little that has been said in it about the Queen's oath, and the Queen's supremacy. Lord Redesdale, on rising soon after Lord Derby, did indeed express his conviction that the Queen would be entitled to put her personal veto upon this measure because of her oath, and that she would in fact commit perjury in assenting to the measure,—if she took the words of the oath in the sense which they conveyed to him, Lord Redesdale. But when such an argument falls to the lot of Lord Redesdale alone, it must be generally understood that the argument is antiquated. Lord Salisbury answered it thoroughly,—almost as clearly as the Bishop of St. David did that other argument as to sacrilege. In the matter of the coronation oath, and in that of supremacy,—as also in regard to the question of sacrilege,—the minds of men are instinctively led to a right conclusion, though the clearness of thought and words necessary for eliminating their convictions from their doubts is wanting to them. No such oath, no supremacy, no bond,

no treaty, can be perpetual, incapable of appeal or repeal, and unchangeable. The state of humanity does not admit of such bonds. Among us Parliament can effect any changes, which, when made, will affect ourselves and us only. Parliament, entrusted with the welfare of the nation, is entitled to judge of the manner by which that welfare may at any time be promoted; and it would be monstrous to say that that welfare must be impeded by the meaning which a sovereign may give to the words of an oath. The feeling was strong, however, when George III. pleaded his oath, and still strong when George IV. made the same plea; but now it has become so weak that it requires the courage, constancy, and undisturbed convictions of a Lord Redesdale to bring it up as an argument in Parliament. We have to thank Lord Salisbury also for having defined very clearly the extent of submission to the expressed will of the people by which the Lords should be governed in their proceedings. That the Lords should be desired to give way to the House of Commons on any point of mooted legislation as to which the people of the country have expressed no strong opinion, would be absurd. By doing so they would abrogate their own position. But when the country has spoken out, then it becomes essential for the well-being of the nation that its desires should not be thwarted by the power of a House which is beyond its direct control.

The last day of the debate was memorable for the speech made by Lord Russell, and for the concluding addresses of three Lord Chancellors. Lord Russell has been always consistent in his wish not only to disendow the Protestant Church of England as established in Ireland, but also to transfer some part of that endowment to the Roman Catholics. In fact, that which is now called concurrent endowment is his theory in the matter. We may say that it has also been our own since first the question was discussed in these pages. We have never believed in Mr. Gladstone's scheme for using up the property of the Irish Church, and have been glad to find Lord Russell among the first of those who have advocated in the House of Lords the propriety of transferring some portion of the Church property to the Roman Catholics. In speaking, however, of the Lords' amendments to the Bill, and of the treatment accorded to them in the House of Commons, we shall necessarily revert to the matter.

Of Lord Westbury's speech little need be said. With most brilliant talents and great aptitude for debate, it has come to pass that his words influence no one. Of all those spoken Lord Hatherly's speech was perhaps the one most strongly argumentative in simple defence of the Bill. Lord Hatherly has at any rate dissipated those fears which were at one time strongly expressed as to his fitness for his place in the House of Lords as a supporter of the Government in debate. The world was told that Lord Cairns would swallow him alive. Hitherto Lord Cairns has swallowed neither him nor anybody

else. Lord Cairns' speech against the Bill was very strong, but it was the speech of an Orangeman rather than of a statesman. At last the second reading was carried by the very large majority of 33;—the numbers being 179 to 146.

But this triumph, if triumph it was, gave rise to but little exultation. As the conviction had become common that the Bill would be read a second time, so had the knowledge grown that the second reading would be permitted only because the Lords would be enabled to resume by amendments in Committee all or the greater part of those good things which the Bill itself had been framed with the object of taking away from the Irish Protestant Church establishment. Not to reject the Bill, but so to amend the Bill that, under these amendments, it might be emasculated as regarded disendowment, was the strategy of the conservative majority of the peers. And we are willing to express our conviction that such strategy was not only to be expected, but was not unreasonable, and will not ultimately be deleterious. The drag on the wheel must act, or the coach will go down the hill with that crash and consequent breakage to which Englishmen are so strongly averse. And, let the drag act as it may, the coach will certainly get down the hill. The presumed object of the Lords' amendment has been to reserve for the Church of England as established in Ireland all, or very nearly all, the funds which it has hitherto possessed. The real object, as entertained in the bosom of individual peers, may not improbably have been to gild of the Bill for the present by means of radical changes in the clauses to which the Commons would certainly not assent. The probable effect of the Lords' amendments will be a salutary alteration in the Bill in regard to the destination of the funds which are to be rescued from a fainéant Church.

From the time in which the actual abolition of the Established Irish Church has been spoken of as a probably forthcoming political measure,—a period not distant from us above five or six years,—it has been felt that the great difficulty consisted in the disposition of the wealth which would accrue. That this wealth was for the present misused,—so appropriated as to create general dissatisfaction, and to contribute as little as possible to the religious wellbeing of the country,—had been acknowledged. Let it be taken away even if, in the taking away, it should perish, because by the injustice of its distribution it wounds the feelings of men. Such had been, and is, the verdict of the country. But there would be the money, and how should it be used for the welfare of the country so that its disposition should give offence to none,—offence to at least as few as might be possible? How should it be used so that no man might justly say, that injustice had been done? This, and this only, has been felt to be the real difficulty in the matter; and it is not surprising, it can hardly be considered vexatious, that in such circumstances the

Lords, who are friendly to the Established Church as a thing of course, should endeavour in the scramble to save the bulk of this wealth for their friends. And we must acknowledge that words fell from Mr. Gladstone last year which tended greatly to encourage the hope that this might be done. In speaking of the Irish Church debate last year, soon after Mr. Gladstone had first given expression to his views, we ventured to suggest that he had fallen into some fault in his endeavour to explain that, after all, the Protestants of Ireland would lose but little of the Church wealth by the projected measure. As it was purposed to take away the whole endowment, this promise,—or hint at a promise, which coming from the future Prime Minister was as bad as a promise,—seemed to himself, as we remarked at the time, to be so paradoxical, that he was obliged to explain his previous statement by calculations which were not intelligible to men in general. We believe he suggested that about five-eighths of the whole property would be saved to the Episcopal Protestant Church of Ireland, and defended the truth of the suggestion by showing that the absolute life interests of incumbents, together with certain of the smaller good things which Parliament might probably be willing to leave to the Church, would, by an actuary's calculation, amount to the named proportion. The mind of the ordinary politician did not follow him in this; but the mind of the ordinary liberal politician was determined that the Irish Church endowments should cease, while the mind of the ordinary conservative politician was led to a resolve that the greater part of these endowments should be saved by means of Mr. Gladstone's promises.

And still there was the difficulty as to the distribution of the funds. No man felt himself to be in the possession of a feasible project. Propositions were made, but were all made doubtfully. Mr. Gladstone's proposition was made doubtfully. Even the clauses which have been passed by the House of Commons in regard to the disposition of the funds, though passed by large majorities, have been passed doubtfully,—have been passed because they have been proposed by the Minister, although it has been felt that he has proposed them doubtfully. This disposition has been corroborated by a second division in the Commons, given on the Lords' amendment;—but it has been corroborated with again increased doubt and with a resolution that Parliament shall still exercise a veto on every contemplated exercise of the funds. One idea only has been common in the minds of men,—the idea, namely, that the funds should not be withdrawn from Ireland. So much may be conceded as fixed. To all theories, to all projects, to all ideas beyond this, there are, from one side and from another, objections so strong, that, though we will not call them insurmountable, we must acknowledge them to be of a strength which requires patient sifting to bring them into subjection. The plan as it came from Mr. Gladstone's brain had not, we think,

been sufficiently winnowed. It was impossible, probably, that it should be so winnowed, except by that process of discussion to which it has been subjected by the Lords' amendments, by the action of the Commons upon those amendments, and by the public discussion for which it has given, and is giving occasion.

To the stern lover of justice,—to him who would govern all political conduct by the saw of *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*,—the most acceptable project was that of distributing these funds among the three predominant Churches of Ireland, in proportion to the population of the worshippers. This would be concurrent endowment pure and simple, and would give us a manipulation of the money which would easily reconcile itself to the religious scruples of all who do not think that God's truths are confined absolutely to their own mode of teaching them. There would be no sacrilege here,—even to those who think that sacrilege may lie in that direction; and there would be much abstract justice. But the objections to such a plan are so great that it would be useless to propose it to Parliament. It is generally believed that the Roman Catholic hierarchy would not accept such an endowment as this would give them; and no House of Commons selected by English and Scotch constituencies would consent to place so large an amount of the wealth of the country in the hands of a priesthood which is under no control from our sovereign, but is in many respects under the control of a foreign sovereign. Lord Stanhope succeeded in the eleventh hour in pressing into the Bill a clause in favour of this priesthood, in the wisdom of which we fully concur, and as to which we will make a further allusion just now. In doing so he referred to the intentions of his great relative, Mr. Pitt,—intentions which would doubtless have greater weight with Lord Stanhope than with most other men. But Lord Stanhope seems hardly to have carried sufficiently in his mind the fact, that Mr. Pitt, when he proposed to endow the Roman Catholic priesthood, intended to subject it and its endowments to the Government of the day, whereas no politician now believes that such subjection is practicable.

The same or similar difficulties have stood in the way of a bestowal of the funds of the Church upon Irish education in general. No scheme could have been more alluring than such a scheme as this, had such a scheme been feasible. But it was not feasible. The money could not have been distributed with such an object in any way that would have satisfied either the House of Commons or the people of Ireland.

And yet there was the necessity that it should be distributed. In this difficulty Mr. Gladstone has had recourse to the halt, the blind, and the silly, and has bidden them to come unto the feast. From the first moment we have felt that it would be well that this proposition should be discussed in a House in which the Minister proposing it

is not all-powerful; and, therefore, we think the Lords' amendments will do much good, though they must necessarily create a delay which will be vexatious to many, and must be very vexatious to Mr. Gladstone himself.

The amendments which were passed in the Lords, and which were of such material moment as to be positively unacceptable to the Government, all refer to the questions of endowment. The Lords' Bill disestablishes the Irish Church as completely as did the Bill before it went to the Lords. An attempt indeed was made to allow existing bishops to maintain the privilege of their intermittent seats in the House of Lords during their lives, and a clause to this effect was carried through the Committee; but Lord Devon, at the last moment, succeeding in annulling this act of questionable mercy. Should the present Bill become law, disestablishment is complete. Everybody, however, knew that the real fight would be for the loaves and fishes. When once the Bill had been read a second time by the Lords, it was impossible that anything should be done towards preserving the Irish Church as a State Establishment.

But very much would have been done towards preserving the endowments of the Irish Church had the amendments of the Lords been accepted by the Commons. It was, however, absolutely impossible that they should be accepted. Indeed the matter is already beyond the reach of opinion. The Lords' amendments in regard to disendowment have been, almost entirely, repudiated by the Commons; and it is known that should the Lords adhere to them, as they probably will to some of them that are most objectionable, another Bill will be again argued and again passed in the House of Commons. We write now while the matter is again before the Lords, and cannot keep our remarks from the printer long enough to enable us to state what will be the ultimate fate of the Bill;—but it is acknowledged on all sides that no Bill can be allowed to become law that does not practically disendow that which, by reason of its endowment, is now the ascendant Church of Ireland. It is the intention of the people that the anomaly of an endowment for a clergy without a flock shall be abolished;—that the insult to the Roman Catholics, which is conveyed by such endowment, shall be discontinued;—and that the injustice of such a use of funds belonging to the public shall be discontinued. After all, to the minds of ordinary men, disestablishment means almost nothing, whereas disendowment means almost everything. A fund supposed to be sufficient for the religious needs of Ireland is at present appropriated to the needs of less than one-eighth of the people, and is so appropriated because that eighth declare their own religion to be the right religion,—being, the while, utterly incapable of bringing over the majority, or any part of it, to their way of thinking! With an arrogance, almost unexampled as a national characteristic, the Irish

members of the Church of England claim to be in the right,—claim to be paid for teaching this right to others,—and yet absolutely fail to teach it;—are absolutely void of any capability to make their doctrines credible to those who should form their congregations. We do not blame them for their inability. It is not given to every priest to be a Luther. It is not given to every nation to be fit for the teaching of a new religion. We say nothing as to the merits of the creeds. But we are absolutely averse to a highly paid church which cannot supply the religious wants of the people. That is the grievance; and the remedy for it is the total disendowment of a Church so useless and so costly. That this Church of the minority should have its eighth of the wealth, if the other seven-eighths could be appropriated in the same way, might be very well;—though a dangerous argument might be deduced from that distribution in reference to the funds of our Church here in England;—but that public funds should, under any other system, be left in its hands is not to be endured. In this case, however, as in all others, it is acknowledged that they who possess life interests should be protected from loss as regards their own annuities. What has to be surrendered, therefore, to the new unendowed and unestablished Church, is either the annuity which every incumbent possesses or a sum calculated to be equal to the value of the aggregate of the annuities;—and, in addition to this, such funds or property as may have been bestowed on the Irish Protestant Church Establishment by private benevolence. So much will willingly be given; and in addition to this it may be acknowledged that the public, with the generosity usual to victors, would allow some additional pickings to slip through their fingers without notice. If anything can be gained to the new Church by the use of the public credit,—as we are told by Mr. Gladstone that much will be gained,—let the new Church be the gainer. But when a system of commutation is proposed to us which is, avowedly, not a commutation of life interests, but a new endowment, then we feel inclined to demand that there shall be no mercy,—nothing but justice. Under the Lords' amendments, instigated, as we fear, by Mr. Gladstone's somewhat rash promise, these pickings would have been carried to such an extent that there would hardly have been any of the pudding left wherewith to feed the halt, the blind, and the silly who have been called unto the feast.

The three great raids on the fund made by the Lords, were, first, the commutation of the annuities due to incumbents to fourteen years' purchase of the whole income of the Church; secondly, the absorption of all residential glebes, or parsonages, without payment; and thirdly, the surrender of the Ulster glebes,—which consist of tracts of land given, not as residences but for beneficial use, to the Established Church by James I. We hardly know which of these attempted spoliations most angered us, or is most opposed

to the presumed intentions of the Bill. As regards the first, we own ourselves to be much vexed at the apparent defalcation of staunch men of our own party. It has been acknowledged, from the first opening of the subject, that the incomes of incumbents should be preserved to them; but these incomes should be preserved actually and accurately, by some arrangement which would leave nothing to chance, but which would precisely give to every existing incumbent exactly what he has now as long as he lives and does his work. Unfortunately it has been found to be necessary to deal with the small grant made to Maynooth for educational purposes, as it is also with the *Regium Donum* to the Presbyterians, while we are dealing with the Established Church. It would have been much to be desired that no such need should have been felt by Mr. Gladstone. The question, at any rate as regards the Maynooth grant, is essentially distinct on its merits; and should have been brought up for consideration, if requiring consideration, in conjunction with the affairs of Trinity College, Dublin. But there exists so strong a feeling in the country at this moment of dislike to the Roman Catholic religion, that the Ministry has felt itself forced to fix a termination for this educational grant to the Church of the majority, because it was about to terminate the endowments of the Church of the minority. Therefore, it has been decided to give to Maynooth College a sum amounting to fourteen years' purchase of its present annual grant, and then to terminate the connection between the college and the revenue. It may be, that if it be expedient to terminate this connection, fourteen years' purchase is more than should be paid. It certainly is more than should be paid to preserve the life-interests of any person or persons. But, in reference to Maynooth, it is not the life-interests of certain persons that are in question, but the educational interests of the college itself. We will admit, however, that the extent of the grant might be made matter of discussion. It has, however, been passed by the Commons, and has been assented to by the Lords. The sum itself is trifling; and the very spirit of Joseph Hume would hardly begrudge such a sum on the score of economy to the education of the priesthood of the majority of the country. But, because this has been granted, Lord Carnarvon has asked for,—and did obtain, as far as the Lords could give it,—fourteen years' purchase of the whole income of the Irish Church, towards re-endowing the clergy, although it is acknowledged on all sides that this will confer on the Church an enormous surplus over and above the sum needed to pay the annuities due to existing incumbents. The argument, if there be any argument, amounts to this;—we have found you tripping in a little matter in regard to Maynooth, and, therefore, we will force you to fall utterly into the mire in regard to the great matter of endowments for an Episcopal Church. If there were aught wrong in what the Commons had proposed for Maynooth, it was open

to the Lords to alter the sum. Instead of doing so, they have insisted on dealing upon a similar scale with a sum of money altogether greater, and applicable altogether to an inferior purpose,—to a purpose which should be absolutely ignored,—that, namely, of re-endowing the Church of the minority after the lapse of the lives of existing incumbents. We have regretted to hear this injustice defended by the old saw applicable to the goose and the gander. We are aware that the Lords' amendment in regard to the fourteen years' commutation has been rejected by the Commons on arguments adduced by Mr. Gladstone quite irrespective of Maynooth,—in adducing which he has given much, though he has not given what the Lords demanded. But the fourteen years' commutation for Maynooth was the special ground on which the Lords demanded fourteen years' commutation of the whole income of the Church Establishment,—as though we should be justified in stripping our friend's garden of all its fruit because he had picked a strawberry from off our beds! But the liberal side of the House of Commons is unwilling in its present mood to make any reference to Maynooth that can be avoided.

The suggested gift of the residential glebes is due to the munificence of Lord Salisbury, who, taking advantage of the strong feeling evinced in favour of an amendment that was to have been proposed by the Duke of Cleveland, was successful in obtaining the assent of the House to a portion of that amendment which Lord Salisbury took out of the duke's mouth. It was the duke's purpose to propose that residences should be afforded to clergymen of the three demominations, and to this view the public, we think, generally acceded, though the present Government is utterly averse to it. Lord Salisbury, however, entertaining a fear that the liberality intended for the Roman Catholics would not find favour with the Ministry,—as indeed it has not found favour with them,—divided the subject; and on the same evening the House of Lords inserted a clause giving residences to the episcopal clergy, but refused to insert a clause giving residences to the others. This was indeed amended by Lord Stanhope, who, on the motion that the Bill do pass, induced the House to vote a gift of glebes to the three Churches; but the clause was carried in opposition to all that the Ministers in the House could say to the contrary, and has already been repudiated by the Commons. We must confess that we greatly regret this decision, though we are quite ready to acknowledge that there may be many reasons pressing on a Minister of which we cannot recognise the entire force. We ourselves can see no better use for a portion of the funds in question than the supply of residences to clergymen of different denominations in Ireland; but we cannot endure that glebes should be given in perpetuity to the clergy of the minority, while they are refused to the clergy of the majority.

The third raid has been that on the Ulster glebes, and this was

made by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He started a question, itself we believe of very little consequence,—excepting as it might give rise to more or less of difficulty in the adjustment of details,—that the date on and from which private gifts should be counted should be moved back from 1660, the year named in the Bill, to the second year of Queen Elizabeth; and added to this a clause that the Ulster glebes, which were given by James in the intervening period, should go with the private gifts,—as though they also bore the flavour of private munificence. We must confess that to us a considerable portion of the sting of this proposition consists in the idea conveyed that what has been given by a sovereign of this realm out of lands accruing to him as sovereign, and so accruing for purposes of State, should be regarded as something for him to do with as he pleased, as a private man may dispose of the half-crowns in his breeches pocket. The Ulster glebes were given as endowment to the Irish Church by the then sovereign in conformity with the privileges and prerogatives of the Crown as then existing; but they were given out of the wealth of the State for State purposes, and must necessarily be resumed with the rest of the State endowments. It was quite impossible that the House of Commons should have consented to a Bill which would have given up these lands to the Irish Protestant Episcopal Church. The amendment has been thrown out, and we are told that the Lords are willing to abandon it.

The only other amendment which we will notice was that moved by Lord Cairns on clause 68, setting aside that bidding to the feast of the halt, blind, and silly,—and postponing determination as to the uses of the money for the further action of Parliament. We are not apt to agree with Lord Cairns on any political subject; but in this we think that he was right. It is not that we wish to have the difficulty kept over our heads. We are fully convinced that the question had better be settled by the Bill which we still trust will be passed this year. But we feel very strongly that the House of Commons owes more consideration than it has yet given to this branch of the question.

And so we will leave the subject, firmly believing that that further consideration of which we speak will be furnished. The amendments of the Commons on the Lords' amendments can hardly be accepted by the Lords;—and then another session must be devoted to the Bill. Looking back on the whole matter, we are inclined to think that the Bill when it becomes law will be a better law than it could have been made without the opposition of the Lords.

EVENINGS ABROAD.

To most men whose lives have been passed London there must have been a period of existence when the question, "Where shall we go to-night?" was one of daily, perhaps I ought to say of nightly, occurrence. With some men this phase of what I may call evenings-abroad life endures till long after middle age, even to the time of grey hairs and bent backs. But for the majority of educated men the phase is, happily, of short duration. In one form or another, as we get on past the salad period of existence, we fall into a groove and stick there. Failing any positive engagement which compels us to leave our homes, we don't like quitting our own firesides when the day's work is over. A cigar after dinner, or a novel read in slippers, or in the case of those who are not,—to use the language of advertising housekeepers,—“quite domesticated,” a rubber or a game of pool at the club, have more attractiveness for the well-to-do denizens of London who will never see thirty again, than all the public entertainments which the town can provide. Still, though to the present writer, as possibly to his reader, the time has gone by in which that question as to the passing of the evening was a perpetually-recurring problem, the goodly army of pleasure-seekers has not dwindled down in numbers because we have fallen out of the ranks. To-night, as indeed on every night throughout the twelvemonth, there are doubtless a hundred thousand or more of Londoners intending to seek their amusement abroad; and every year this number grows larger, not only positively, but relatively to the size of the population. How far this craving for amusement is hurtful or otherwise is a very difficult and complicated question, on which the limits of my space, if nothing else, would forbid my entering here. This much, however, I must say, that the theory of life which would condemn all such pleasure-seeking as a profitless waste of time and money seems to me a very narrow one. I am not speaking now of the Puritanical theory,—as, granted the premises of the Puritan faith, the conclusions drawn from it are not open to dispute,—but of the social-economical theory. It is the fashion among a certain school of well-meaning theorists to dilate upon the evils which music-halls and theatres, and dancing-rooms and tea-gardens, entail upon the working-class. The intelligent mechanic,—as we all have been told time after time,—goes home as soon as his work is done, takes the children out to walk, or digs in the garden, reads Comte or Mill when the baby is put to bed; and if

he wants recreation, goes to a lecture on chemistry, or a penny-reading. But as far as my own experience goes, the intelligent mechanic is not a representative of his class. No doubt our working men would be much better off if they foreswore pipes and eschewed beer, never played at skittles, stopped at home every night, never went out upon the spree, and followed in all things the example of Robin Goodchild of tract celebrity. But so in exactly the same way it might be better for the material welfare of my readers if they dropped all acquaintance with Havana cigars and Château Lafitte; if they dined on cold mutton and rice-pudding; if they never hunted, or shot, or played cards; if their wives dressed in cotton instead of in silks; if they never took a holiday, or confined their annual outing to Gravesend or Hampstead; if, in other words, they denied themselves every enjoyment which relieves the daily routine of life from its dullness. Fortunately or unfortunately, as you choose to think, the craving for entertainment, the desire for something to break the uniformity of existence, is common to all classes of the community; and, whether we like it or not, we have to deal with the fact that there is a demand for public entertainments which must infallibly secure a supply. How that supply is provided is a question which cannot fail to interest even those who have long ago ceased to look for their recreation abroad.

Now no man, even if he have passed into the era of foggydom, can walk the streets of London without being aware that a decided change has passed over the fashion of popular entertainments in the metropolis within the last fifteen years. In estimating any change of the kind I allude to, it is well to bear in mind the moral of a story which has always tickled my fancy. Two old lawyers, who in their "years of wandering" had been noted as admirers of female beauty, were chatting over their wine, and the younger said to the elder, "It seems to me the women are not as pretty as they used to be." "Ah, brother, brother!" was the answer of the elder and wiser, "the nuts are as toothsome as they ever were; but our teeth are not as strong to crack them." So, it may well be, that the change of which I speak is rather in the point of view from which public entertainments are regarded than in the entertainments themselves. Yet I cannot but think that there is a very real and perceptible change. The generation which was fresh and hot upon the amusements of the town in the Crimean years, was infinitely less roystering and noisy in its search of pleasure than the young bloods of a quarter of a century before; and so I think that the young London men of to-day are quieter and more sober in their ways than their elders were before them. I learn, indeed, from the writers who depict to me the habits of the Girls of the Period and the ways of the fashionable world, that young men and young women in the present year of grace are no better than they ought to be, and disregard the outward

restraints which formerly distinguished the amateur from the professional sinner. But I own that my acquaintance with the "haute volée" of fashion is not sufficiently intimate to justify my expressing any opinion as to the truth or falsehood of this portraiture. Still, I do know a good deal about the young men who frequent clubs, and though I have no wish to represent them as much better than their predecessors, they are quiet, and even staid, in their amusements. They tell me that casinos are no longer the resort of "fools of quality," and that Cremorne itself is not visited habitually by the gilded youth. Unquestionably the one-in-the-morning-closing movement has done a good deal to bring about this change. With our late dining hours, parties and operas are scarcely over before all public resorts of entertainment are closed; and gentlemen anxious to "finish the night" must seek for such amusement as they can find in clubs or chambers. Your recollections of London life need not be of venerable, —or, for that matter, un-venerable,—antiquity to recall a long list of nightly resorts which are now traditions of the past. The Portland Rooms, the "Pic," the Coal Hole, the "Finish," and their fellows, are numbered amidst things that were, and happily have left no successors. The existence of all such establishments is, no doubt, transitory; they are here to-day, or rather to-night, and gone to-morrow; but still, if the public demand for such resorts had not died away, I think they would now exist under other names;—and this, from what I gather by the talk that meets my ears, is not the case.

So, too, there is another change,—a change also for the better,—which cannot fail to strike any frequenter of public places of amusement, whose memory extends back over a score of years. Of all the scenes which Thackeray depicted in his stories, there are few, I think, more vivid than the chapter in the "Newcomes" where the Colonel takes Clive to the "Back Kitchen," and leaves the room in disgust on the recital of Costigan's song. The exact words of the concluding sentence I have not before me as I write, but I know their purport was this,—that as the Colonel stalked from the room, brandishing his cane as he went, every man there present felt as if his cheek tingled morally from a stroke of that upraised rattan. Something of the same kind must have been felt by most of the London men who read the "Newcomes" when it first charmed and delighted the world. At that time you could not visit the most respectable of public music-rooms without hearing songs of the "Sam Hall" and "Billy Barlow" order,—songs which, without any prudery, you may say were unfit, not only for the ears of boys, but of grown-up men. Now-a-days all that is changed. I presume, that if you are really bent upon indulging in the gratification of hearing improper melodies, you can always find some opportunity for consulting your taste; but that opportunity will not be found in any of

the regular evening haunts about town. There may still be "Back Kitchens" somewhere or other, where the Fokers and Costigans congregate; but they are not accessible to ingenuous youth,—not to be found except by those who seek for them of malice prepense and aforethought.

On the other hand, the "Café Chantant" is an institution unknown to the Pendennis era; and cancan-dancers, female acrobats, Azellas and Finettes, and hoc genus omne, are novelties of our own day, manifestations of a new form of the public taste for stimulants, which upon the stage has given us Schneiders and Adah Isaacs Menkens. I am not treating now of the comparative morality or immorality of listening to gross ditties, as compared with that of gazing upon semi-nude forms. I only note the change as indicating a sort of tendency to refinement, even in coarse exhibitions. It is recorded of one of the least reputable of Parisian Chronicles that a contributor was once dismissed, because the tone of his contributions had been too free. On complaining to the proprietor that he had understood "Libertinage" was to form the subject-matter of his "*Croniques du jour*," he was answered: "*Libertinage tant que tu voudrais, mais libertinage élégant.*" And, in the same way, it seems to me to be the aim of the modern purveyors of questionable entertainments to give them a certain coating of elegance. Whether this is an advantage or a loss to the cause of public morality is, of course, an open question; but the fact is certain.

I am, however, concerned in this paper rather with the amusements of the million than of the young men about town, and their evenings abroad. In a society like ours where there is an immense population of unmarried men, with a good deal of time and money at their disposal, and very little occupation of any kind, there is always sure to be a certain world in which the men may possibly be brave, but the women are assuredly not virtuous; and for this world, as a matter of certainty, there will be trysting-places. Of such places, of their fashions, customs, and frequenters, it would be foreign to my purpose to speak here; and, indeed, there is but little that need be said anywhere. "Life," using that word in its "*viveur*" term, is very much the same at all times; and the prodigal of the day spends his substance in riotous living, after the same fashion as his prototype who went into a far country. I only allude to the haunts of prodigaldom from the fact that they are frequently associated in public opinion with the resorts of genuine pleasure-seekers. In theory it is not easy to draw the line between the two. The mere presence of persons of disreputable character amidst the visitors to any resort of public entertainment is not sufficient to brand the place as evil. Under our existing social arrangements there is probably not a theatre, concert-room, or dancing establishment, accessible to the general public on the simple condition of payment, at which women of more or less loose life may not be

found amidst the frequenters. The question which decides the repute or disrepute of any place of amusement is, whether such persons as I have alluded to come there as ordinary spectators or for the purpose of plying their trade. Any person at all acquainted with London life could tell with ease what resorts come under each of the above categories. There are some which belong unmistakably to one class or the other; there are many which stand on a sort of debateable land between the two. But, as a rule, I may say that the resorts which at all deserve the name of the "Royal Pandemonium,"—recently attached to one of the most notorious of such places by a writer in "All the Year Round,"—are to be found either in the Haymarket region or in Ratcliffe Highway. The houses of entertainment to be found in the parts of the metropolis not affected by men-about-town or Jack ashore, cater for the patronage of the respectable classes. I am not writing a moral essay on the subject of public amusements, or else it would be a curious topic of speculation to consider why the respectability of any audience at a public pleasure resort is generally in inverse proportion to the general morality of the country wherein it takes place. It is enough, however, to say that foreigners are apt to form a very mistaken opinion as to the standard of English morals, from the extremely mixed character of the company which visit our pleasure haunts. In this country, perhaps more than any other, the social wheat and tares grow up side by side; and the fact is one always to be taken into account in any speculation of the kind in question.

However, at this rate, the evening will be gone before we get abroad at all. Let me suppose, then, that the reader of these lines is a stranger in London, a young man from the country, about as little ignorant of the world as most Bucolic youths are now-a-days; and that he has to face the problem where to spend the evening. Of course he may go to South Kensington, or to the Polytechnic, or to an oratorio at Exeter Hall, or to some one of the many readings, half-hours with our best authors, which are given nightly in the metropolis. I am very far from saying he would not do well to go to such places as these; he might easily go farther and fare worse; but, somehow, human nature, especially of the juvenile order, being constituted as it is at present, craves for more exciting amusements than lectures, or sacred music, or picture-galleries. I will suppose, too, that the imaginary Telemachus, to whom, for the time, I act as Nestor, is not addicted to casinos, and has little taste for Royal Pandemoniums or their smaller rivals. Granted these conditions, the searcher after amusement in London has three courses open to him. He may choose between theatres, public gardens, and music-halls. Under these three heads you may practically class all the places of entertainment which exist in the capital.

Now, of the above, the theatre is of course the amusement to be

most recommended in itself. Since the days of Macready and Charles Kean the playhouse has been completely purified from the charge of being the resort of doubtful—or doubtless—characters. Saloons have ceased to exist, and for the ordinary public it is as difficult to go behind the scenes as to enter the archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth; and if entrance could be effected, the young men of the period would probably find both places about equally dull and decorous. The stage, at any rate, is free from imputations to which even the best conducted music-halls and gardens are open; and, indeed, if I knew of any young man that he spent his evenings in London regularly at the play, I should feel very little anxiety about the excellence of his moral conduct. Whether I should augur equally well of his intellectual prospects is another question. The never-ending controversy concerning the decline of the drama need not be discussed here. As a matter of fact, the public probably gets the class of theatrical entertainment it prefers. If people sincerely preferred the legitimate drama to burlesques, and desired classical tragedies in lieu of sensation dramas, their taste would infallibly be consulted. Somehow or other Boucicault draws better than Shakespeare, and “School” brings together larger houses than the “Rightful Heir.” It may be, —I think it is,—desirable that public taste in stage matters should undergo a change; but I utterly demur from the assumption that theatres would be more visited, or would pay better, if they provided a more intellectual class of entertainment. The reason why the theatre is no longer the nightly resort of the town must be sought for in a variety of accidental causes, and not in the fact that the public has out-grown the stage in intellect. In all discussions about the decline of the drama, I am reminded of the famous problem which Charles II. propounded to the Royal Society as to why a fish plunged into a bucket full of water did not make it overflow. I should answer any query as to why the drama had declined, by saying it had not declined at all, in the ordinary commercial sense of the word decline. We have more theatres now than we ever had in London; they make more money, and pay better prices to actors and authors; and if the average quality of the entertainment provided is not relatively as good as it used to be, this is because the public has declined in quality and prefers an inferior article.

In fact, if I am right, the commercial prosperity of our London theatres is one of the causes which most disqualifies them from fulfilling their normal function of providing places where evenings abroad can be passed at once pleasantly and profitably. I suppose even Mr. Robertson himself would admit that no man can be expected to go and see “Caste” or “Society” night after night for half a year; and yet unless he is prepared to see the same play, played by the same actors, the searcher after entertainment can scarcely spend more than one or at most two evenings abroad at any of our popular London

theatres. In the palmy days of the drama a playgoer might reckon on a change of performance at least once a week, but now-a-days the playbills of our London playhouses might be stereotyped throughout the season. Variety is charming; and yet variety is the last inducement offered in London to any modern stage-struck Wilhelm Meister. Then, again, it must be fairly owned that our metropolitan theatres make large demands upon the purses of their frequenters. In the extreme freshness of youth men may be found ready, for amusement's sake, to sit in pit or gallery in order to enjoy the talent of an admired actor, or to gaze upon the loveliness of an adored actress; but when the first charm of London life is lost, men think twice before they go to the theatre elsewhere than in the stalls for pleasure; and if they do so go, they must reckon what with cabs, tickets, box openers, playbills, and so forth, on spending at least ten shillings on their evening's amusement. And in addition to the outlay, they know beforehand that they will be uncomfortable for their money. Even an orchestra stall is not a pleasant resting-place for a human frame, exhausted by the fatigue and bustle of a London day. In these degenerate times frail human nature, especially if it belongs to the stronger sex, falsely so called, gets weary of sitting still for hours, and when bent upon pleasure, craves for tobacco and its concomitant luxuries. The gods in the galleries are, it is true, made of sterner mould than the occupants of the stalls; and at popular theatres, like the Standard or the Britannia, there are to be found immense audiences which look to the stage alone for their enjoyment. But even in these primitive resorts, innovations have crept in, and those suburban theatres are most frequented to which, like the Grecian Saloon, taverns and tea gardens are attached.

To a student of English character the difference between the entertainment provided at West End and East End theatres is well worth the noting. In the fashionable quarters of the town five-act plays are a drug; the legitimate drama is played to empty houses; burlesques supply the staple of the evening's amusement; and ballets, performed by ladies more or less décolletés,—rather more, I should say, than less,—have become an essential element of every genuine theatrical success. In the immense cities,—for they are nothing less,—of Pimlico, Belgravia, Brompton, Chelsea, Kensington, Notting Hill, and Tyburnia, there is not, in as far as I am aware, a solitary theatre of any kind. Such demand for the play as there exists in these quarters is satisfied by occasional visits to the Strand and its adjacent theatrical localities. Whereas in the suburbs of the metropolis inhabited by the operative classes there are theatres without end. And in these regions Shakesperian dramas, serious melodramas, and pieces that do not depend for their success on costumes or ballets, or sensation effects, still command a steady favour. To argue, from this fact, that the tastes of the working classes are

more elevated and intellectual than those of the educated class, would, I suspect, be a mistake ; but their tastes are assuredly more simple, and their mental development has not yet reached a point where the mind can no longer be diverted by the fictitious interests of the stage. The theatre, pure and simple, seems to me the amusement of a nation amidst whom the battle of life is not fought very keenly ; and, whether for good or bad, the English public appears to me to have passed the point at which the drama without its accessories can suffice for its entertainment.

So, too, though from very different reasons, the public gardens of London seem to me to have seen their palmy days. The times have changed since lords and ladies used to meet at Ranelagh ; and even the visit of Pendennis to Vauxhall, in company with Captain Costigan and his lady friends, belongs to an era which has somewhat passed away. Ranelagh remains only in the memory of antiquarians. The Royal Gardens of Vauxhall are covered over with streets and terraces. The Red House is gone. The Queen's Gardens, at Bayswater, are gone also ; and Cremorne, if report speaks truly, is likely before long to succumb to the encroachments of the great city that is rising round it on every side. The attempt made some years ago to revive the fashionable glories of Cremorne proved a failure, like most revivals ; and, even as a lounge for young men about town, the gardens have lost much of their aristocratic patronage. For the good of the community at large the change is not to be regretted. It is much better for themselves that when young men come away from the Opera or from evening parties, they should go straight to bed, or smoke quietly at their clubs, instead of driving down to Cremorne in hansoms, sitting up to the small hours, drinking champagne,—so called by courtesy,—or soda and brandy, and coming home by daylight, poorer in pocket, and certainly not richer in any knowledge worth acquiring. Now-a-days, your London loungeur must be much more active and energetic about the pursuit of pleasure than it is the custom of his class to be about anything, in order to get down to Cremorne after the business of the evening is over, and to be there in time to drink more than is good for him ; and, failing this last possibility, the long drive down to Battersea Bridge is too arduous an enterprise to be undertaken. Indeed, there are few things which change more rapidly than the fashions of entertainments. Who would have thought twenty years ago that Astley's would cease to be the delight of school-boys ? Yet, since the classic circus was converted into a commonplace theatre, the equestrian art seems to be worshipped no longer in London. It is not so in the provinces. All the year through itinerant circuses travel over the face of England, and there are few towns of any size which are not visited two or three times in the year by strolling companies of horse riders, the beauty of whose dresses, the magnificence of whose studs,

and the daring of whose horsemanship, excite the envy of all the boys and half the girls in the place. But Astley's, where Kit of the "Old Curiosity Shop" took his mother and Jacob and little Barbara, is gone, and has left no heir to its fame. London is, as far as I know, the only great capital in Europe which has no permanent equestrian theatre. There is not, and, to the best of my knowledge, there has not been for some time in the Metropolis, any regular series of equestrian performances. Only fancy;—there must be a generation of school-boys growing up in London, to whom the "scenes of the ring" convey no recollections,—who don't know who Mr. Merriman is,—who have never revelled in the humour of the clown,—who have never worshipped an ethereal being in short skirts and pink fleshings bounding through an endless series of hoops from the back of the wild horse of the Prairies! Surely in these days of school reform such ignorance is disgraceful to the community! There is, too, subject for meditation in the discovery which may be made by any searcher after amusement who casts his eye down the lists of public entertainments, that there is not now in this city any conjuring exhibition of note. I confess that, especially in the dog days, the idea of seeing a pudding brought out of the lining of a hat, or a live goose extracted from a pint pewter pot, does not inspire me with ardent curiosity. But surely our children cannot have grown so "blasés" as to have lost the taste for legerdemain? Can it be that Philippe and Houdin, and Wiljalba Frikell, and Stodare, and Anderson, are forgotten by boyish memories? There may be something of chance in the temporary absence of circus and conjuror at one and the same time from London. But I fancy accident is not the sole explanation of the fact; and that children, as well as their elders, like their amusements somewhat more highly seasoned than they did a score of years ago. I don't suppose children now-a-days could be induced to sit through an exhibition of Adams' orrery; and I am afraid even dissolving views have gone out of child favour. I do not say that the small folk are wrong; I only note their change of taste as an indication of a tendency running through the whole of society.

Be this as it may, the after-midnight company of Cremorne has dwindled away since the passing of the One-o'clock Closing Act; and I fancy the Gardens have not quite adapted themselves to the change in the quality of its visitors. Places of entertainment, like clubs and newspapers, and other institutions of a similar kind, are bound by their own traditions, and cannot easily survive a change in their connection. Now, Cremorne in its old days had a twofold public. There was the before-the-fireworks public of tradesmen and their families, city clerks and servants out for a holiday; there was the after-fireworks public of men about town, and women of the town. And the two publics, though quite distinct, attracted each other. The jog-trot holiday folk liked the savour of fast life attaching to Cremorne from

the patronage of the "viveurs;" and the men-about-town—having, as all Englishmen always have in their own country, a secret regard for respectability,—liked the sort of orderly repute given to the Gardens by the presence of the steady father-of-family element. But as things now are, Cremorne has had, perforce, to choose between its two classes of customers; and if it is to exist permanently, it must be what the Germans call a "Volk's Garten." It lies out of the way of the populous quarters of London; and the value of its ground for building purposes must be so great, that I doubt whether a tea-drinking, beer-bibbing, and pipe-smoking public will spend enough money in the Gardens to make the speculation a profitable one. Whether London will have any cause of sorrow that Cremorne should become even as Vauxhall and Ranelagh, is a point on which opinions may differ; but it must be fairly owned that when its ten thousand lamps are extinguished, we shall have lost the prettiest public pleasure garden of which any capital could boast. It has been my fortune, as a roving tourist, to visit most of the Vauxhalls, Tivolis, Lust-Gartens, Mabilles, and so on, to be seen in Europe; and in the beauty of the locale Cremorne seems to me superior to them all. The only thing wanting to make it a really pleasant resort for pleasure-seekers is the presence of a crowd which could look, at any rate, as if it was enjoying itself. Unfortunately, our English nature does not lend itself easily to the sort of gaiety required to enjoy an evening of revelry. Our grown-up men and women, both for good and bad, have not so much of the child about them as the adults of other lands. It is not in us to go in heartily for merry-go-rounds, and swings, and dancing, and fireworks; or, at least, it is not in the class which frequents Cremorne to do so in the presence of an unknown public. I know of few spectacles more gloomy than that of a number of English folks trying to be lively and failing in the effort consciously; and this spectacle may be seen constantly at Cremorne. There is a good deal, happily, of the Puritan feeling about our people still; and even if our young men make up their minds to consort with riotous livers, they dislike being seen in the act of rioting.

If you want to see an English pleasure-garden at its best, you should go, I think, to some place not visited by our "golden youth," and not frequented therefore by the tribe which lives upon their follies. Round and about London there are dozens of public gardens where swells are unknown, and people go not to see life, but to enjoy themselves after their own heart. The old-fashioned tavern-cum-tea-garden, such as the "Cock" at Edmonton, whither John Gilpin set forth upon his famous ride, if not belonging, like the free-and-easy sing-song, to the past, is gradually passing away. At such places of entertainment,—of which the "Rye-House" is perhaps the most distinguished existing example,—the public were left pretty much to provide their own amusement. A pleasure-

garden to stroll about in, a bar to drink at, a skittle-ground, a bowling-alley, a lawn to dance on, and a stray fiddler, were about all that the proprietor contributed toward the amusement of his customers, and it has always seemed to me that ordinary English folk enjoyed themselves more thoroughly in these tea-gardens than they did in more pretentious establishments. However, the spirit of progress is improving the simple tavern with a lawn behind it from off the face of the metropolis; and the places "to spend a happy day,"—as per advertisement,—are Rosherville, and Anerley, and North Woolwich, and other resorts less known to advertising fame. At all these various resorts "an endless variety of entertainment,"—I am again quoting from the mural literature with which all railway travellers are familiar,—is provided for the public. Done into plain English this announcement means that there is a band of music, a hermit's cave, a gipsy who tells fortunes, a platform for dancing, and at the more ambitious resorts,—a theatre, a company of Ethiopian minstrels, an acrobatic performance, or an exhibition of jugglery. I suppose, if you are what I once heard called "one of our reg'lars,"—that is, a constant attendant of any such resort,—you would recognise amidst the company a good number of persons, and especially of the fairer sex, who, to use a mild euphemism, are no better than they ought to be. To the uninitiated observer the company looks vulgar, if you like, but homely and respectable. So, too, the amusements may not be refined; but they are to outward viewing quiet and harmless. This I think you may say, without insular prejudice, is not the case with most continental pleasure gardens. There may be, and doubtless are, many respectable persons at Asnières and the Barrier Balls at Paris, at Krolls and the Orpheum in Berlin, at the Neue Welt in Vienna, and at other gardens of a like kind frequented by the inhabitants of foreign cities. But yet, to put matters to a practical test, I don't fancy masters of households and fathers of families would exactly approve of their womenkind being seen at these resorts. Whereas, except on the general grounds which may be urged against all places of resort open promiscuously to the public, I cannot see why a household interdict should be laid on our English people's gardens. The recreation afforded there is commonplace and vulgar enough, is wanting in the "light and sweetness" Mr. Matthew Arnold values so highly; but, on the other hand, it is wanting also in the extravagance and profligacy which, judging from my own observation, are associated with public amusements in lands where the "sweet and light" is studied more consistently than it is with us.

I doubt whether exactly the same meed of qualified encomium can be given to the last, but not the least, of the three classes of an entertainment provided for those who wish to spend their evenings abroad. The "music-hell,"—to use the cant of the day,—is the "great fact" of the present generation of pleasure-seekers. Till the

Exhibition of 1851 the music-hall, as we know it now, was unknown in London. There were sing-songs held in the back parlours of sporting taverns; there was "Evans's," where ladies were not admitted at that time,—for most cogent reasons, and where the literary and artistic notabilities of London really used to congregate. If my memory does not deceive me, the Canterbury Hall must have been opened about the period of the "World's Fair," and this hall is unquestionably the parent and progenitor of the race of music-halls. From what I can learn I should say that the music-hall, as at present constituted, supplied a real popular want. At any of these establishments you can drop in for as short or as long a time as you like. The payment of a shilling or sixpence, or in some cases of even a less amount, renders you free of the place from about eight to twelve; you can drink as much as you please, provided you do not get offensively intoxicated; but you are not compelled to drink anything. You can smoke all through the performance; you can witness a variety of exhibitions, none of which require a very great amount of intellectual exertion to appreciate, and all of which serve to fill up the time indifferently well. There is but little difference in the outward aspect and decorations of these establishments. Leaving the Alhambra out of the question,—an institution which both for good or bad can hardly be classed with the ordinary café-chantant of London,—our music-halls are all of one pattern. A long room filled with tables, a gallery running round it, and a stage at one end, complete the "*locus in quo*" of these establishments. The galleries and the benches round the stage are generally reserved for the aristocratic customers who do not mind paying a shilling for the right of entry. The body of the hall is the "*habitat*" of the general public. Shop-boys and clerks represent the "*jeunesse dorée*" of the opera stalls; artisans with their families make up, however, the major part of the audience. Of course, the social-evil element is not wanting. There are Incognitas in Islington, and Anonymas in Camberwell; and the George Barnwells of the period meet their Lucys at the music-halls of the suburbs. But still in these resorts women of the town are an accident, not as in some West End places of amusement, the chief attraction. And, in consequence, the entertainment given is designed to suit the tastes of a far less sophisticated public than that which frequents the Haymarket quarter of London. At some of these places, notably at the Oxford, which was destroyed by fire not long ago, very excellent selections of operatic music form part of the entertainment; but I question whether music without acting, even if it be of the Offenbach and Hervé class, is not rather above the heads, or beyond the taste of the genuine music-hall public. Still, the old-fashioned comic singer, the man with the bad hat perched upon the back of his head, who used to walk round and round the platform like the polar bear

in his cage between each verse of his ditty, has ceased to be the chief favourite of the audience. The successful comic singers of the present day belong to a different category from the minstrels of the "Pretty Little Ratecatcher's Daughter" era. The other day I purchased in the street a sixpenny manual, indited with the view of instructing juvenile musical aspirants how to become comic singers. I cannot say that I learnt much instruction therefrom, as I was told that the possession of a good voice and a correct ear were essential requisites to success in the music-hall line of business; but I gathered that the celebrities of the profession, the "Great Vances," and "Jolly Nashes," and "Sydney Barnes," and so forth, were gentlemen who earned large salaries, and drove in carriages to the establishments they honoured with their presence, and were men of note,—whom not to know was to argue yourself unknown. These popular singers are, I take it, the chief attractions of such places as Weston's, the Philharmonic, the Metropolitan, and the rest of the halls. It is the fashion to talk of the extreme inanity and vulgarity of the ditties to which these stars give fame, and which, sanctioned by the hall mark of approval, become for a time the melodies of the streets. And on æsthetic grounds I don't know what you can say for such songs as "Slap bang, here we are again," "Champagne Charlie," or the "Rollicking Rams." I own that one's estimate of the human intellect is *not* exalted when you see a crowd of grown-up people shout themselves hoarse with delight at the spectacle of a man dressed in imitation of a swell, singing such words as these:—

"A Shoreditch toff,
A toff, a toff, a toff,
Oh am I not Immensikoff,"

and so on for a score of verses. Yet, if you try to judge fairly, you will see that about all these ditties, which are the rage of the music-halls, there is a certain jingle and sparkle which may well please people not over burdened with thought, and much over burdened with the day's toil and labour. After all, too, the songs sung are not openly coarse or immoral, scarcely even suggestive. "Theresa" has had no counterpart in London; and such a song as "Rien n'est sacré pour un Sapeur," which made the fortune of the Alcazar at Paris, would have little chance of obtaining a hearing from an English music-hall audience. In fact, there seems to me to be a good deal too much said about the impropriety of our café-chantant entertainments. The anglicised versions of the can-can as danced recently on some London stages would be deemed slow and tame at any Parisian *salle de danse*; and even the exhibition of female acrobats, which called forth,—and I think rightly,—the strictures of our London journals, was indecent rather in idea than in practice. Moreover, Ethiopian serenaders, *prima donnas* who warble sentimental melo-

dies, performing dogs, bounding brothers, rope dancers, and gymnasts, who contribute the bulk of the entertainment to be witnessed at any of our London music-halls, can scarcely be accused of any worse sin against public taste than the providing of a somewhat insipid and tame entertainment.

Such as it is, the audience like it. Care may possibly sit behind the frequenters, even of the Elysium ; but the burthen is lightened for the time. The young clerks in the stalls may do their best to look bored or indifferent, but the spectators in the body of the building make no pretence of the kind ; they are out to enjoy themselves, and they set to the work manfully. They encore everything, from the solo on the violin, played with the instrument held behind the back of the player, to the double-shuffle with which the Lancashire clog-dancer finishes his performance ; and their delight becomes rapture when the comic singer of the night calls upon them to join in chorus, and sing the burden of the song, such as,—

“ When I go in,
I stand to win,
Tommy Dodd, Tommy Dodd.”

Whole families of working-men,—the baby in arms not excluded,—may be seen gathered round the tables in the pit. With beer to drink, tobacco to smoke, power to chat as much as they please, and a spectacle suited to the most indolent of minds, the mechanics who fill the back benches have got pretty much all they want in the way of entertainment ; and that is a good deal more than you can say for the frequenters of more fashionable places of recreation. There used to be an old slang saying, “ What’s the odds so long as you’re happy,” which contains a good deal of philosophic truth, and which may be cited as an answer to any objection raised against the vacuity of the entertainment provided at music-halls. It may be odd that rational beings with immortal souls should take delight in the “ Perfect Cure ;” but then the immortal-soul argument would, if carried to its logical result, exclude many other things beside music-hall songs. I fancy you need not look very far below the surface to understand why an evening abroad at a music-hall may give real honest pleasure even to men who know there is something higher in life than pipes and beer. Think of the dull round of labour which most of our London working men go through day after day, of the sordid homes, the dingy streets, the colourless lives ; and you may understand how gaslight and spangles, comic songs and ballet dances, may represent to them the element of poetry, for which we all of us crave in life, and seek constantly,—most frequently without finding it.

Without doubt it could be wished that these music-halls appealed to something higher than the mere childish love of jingle and sparkle. And, in course of time, they will doubtless add theatrical exhibitions to their performances. They would have done so already but for the

monopoly of stage acting, conferred by the Licensing Act on theatres pure and simple; and the very vehemence of the opposition with which the London managers have opposed all schemes for allowing spoken plays to be performed in music-halls is clear proof that, in their opinion, the hall public would welcome theatrical performances if united with those pleasures of smoking and drinking not provided at the regular temples of the drama. If the dignity of the drama cannot survive the fumes of pipes and the jingling of glasses, so much the worse for the stage. The higher class of plays must always be performed in places reserved exclusively for acting; but one-act pieces and farces might and would be performed on the boards of music-halls were it not for the prohibition of an absurd law; and even a farce, such as "Box and Cox," appeals to a higher order of mental faculties than "Tommy Dodd" or the "Rollicking Rams." Thus, unless I am mistaken, music-halls will grow more and more the popular-amusement places of London pleasure-seekers, and while these institutions are conducted as they are at present, society will not have any particular ground for complaint.

It is not to be wished that our English public should ever become smitten with the same mania for amusement as afflicts the publics of Paris and Vienna, and even if it were to be wished it is not to be expected. Our national tastes are, in matters of amusement, stay-at-home, not gad-about. Given such conditions of wealth and comfort as enable a man to live pretty much as he pleases, and he does not care with us to spend his evenings abroad. And as a rule you may safely say, that the practice of the well-to-do Englishman is the ideal of the Englishman who is not well to do. If our working men had got homes they could dwell in comfortably, they, like the members of a higher social scale, could find their pleasure by their own fire-sides. The cause of the immense development of places of amusement in London within the last few years I take to arise from the fact that wages have risen materially, and that the dwellings of the wage-earning class are still places where quiet and comfort and cleanliness are almost unobtainable luxuries. If a man cannot amuse himself at home he will seek amusement abroad; and if public-house bars have suffered, as I am told they have, from the patronage given to music-halls, the change has been one for the better. Whether evenings at home will ever become for the working classes of London as attractive as evenings abroad, is a problem for social reformers, not to be dwelt upon in a cursory notice.

LORD LYNDHURST.

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY, Lord Lyndhurst, was one of those men whom not even the enthusiasm of biographers will pronounce great. He was born neither to originate, to guide, nor to arrest revolutions. "The brow of Olympian Jove was combined with weak facial proportions." The virtues which warm the circle of good-fellowship were not supported, to a proportionate extent, by the virtues which belong to the family of strength. But, perhaps with a humorous intent and a view to keeping our admiration for rigid, monitorial excellence within bounds, nature has made men of this stamp pleasant and interesting, and frequently rewards them with splendid success. Lyndhurst was thrice Chancellor of Great Britain,—some people count it four times. With two sovereigns he was a personal favourite. From "the task of the greatest" he always shrank, or always proved himself unfit to accomplish it; but he was just great enough to have a very important influence in affairs, and to furnish instruction of a singularly valuable kind to the student of our recent history. In following the career of Lyndhurst we are placed behind the scenes of the political drama in England as we can hardly otherwise be. Through his eyes we can note with eminent advantage the ebb and flow of opinion, the making and unmaking of ministries, the eddying changes, cross-currents, and welterings to and fro, of that strange battle between Whig and Tory, with auxiliary pull of Radicals, now on this side, now on that, which has so long constituted parliamentary government in England. The very mood of the man favours our attitude of observation. He was never seriously moved. He had no idea of being "dreadfully in earnest." A cheery epicureanism was his philosophy of life. A smile of good-humoured cynicism twinkled in his eye and hovered over his lip. We are in no danger of being inflamed by him into enthusiasm, or seduced into partisanship.

Lord Lyndhurst died in 1863, in his ninety-second year. It seems but yesterday when he was in his place in the House of Lords; yet to recur to the days of his youth is like recurring to a remote age which, with its interests and institutions, has melted quite away. He had attained his majority when the French Revolution was at its height, and the French Revolution dates for us the commencement of what is, strictly speaking, modern history. He was born in Boston, then a rising sea-port in his Majesty's North American colonies, in May,

1772. His grandfather, a native of England, had married a lady named Mary Singleton, and their son, John Singleton Copley, father of Lord Lyndhurst, was American by birth. Turning from the commercial pursuits in which his father had been engaged, John Singleton Copley devoted himself to the pursuit of art, and with so much success that, in 1772, he had attained the highest eminence possible to him in the colony as a portrait-painter. Two years after the birth of the future Chancellor, he visited England and the Continent, partly with a view to inspecting the masterpieces of art, partly in order to survey the ground with reference to a contemplated removal of his wife and son to England. Some of his works had already been exhibited in the Royal Academy, and his reputation preceded him to London. Settling in the metropolis, he attained distinction by his picture of the "Death of Chatham," was elected a Royal Academician, and occupied a place of eminence in his profession until his death in 1815. No name of the first rank belongs to the school of historical art in England; but Copley's "Death of Major Pierson," his "Charles I. attempting the Arrest of the Five Members," his "Siege of Gibraltar," his "Death of Chatham," and a few others, entitle him to be considered its foremost representative. He was evidently a man of great general ability and energy, and the fact that he trained himself at Boston to make a brilliant reputation in England, when Gainsborough was in full practice, and Sir Joshua Reynolds presided over the Royal Academy, proves that, if not a man of original or commanding genius, he had an extraordinary natural aptitude for art.

Though Copley had sought a calmer sphere when the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies was becoming serious, his sympathies were with those among whom he grew to manhood. In 1782 a friend wrote to him from Boston, referring to the cause of the colonists as having lain near his heart, and his commemoration of the death of Chatham, who fainted in his last speech in the House of Lords when in the act of recommending the acknowledgment of American independence, was doubtless intended, and was received, as a compliment to the patriots. These circumstances are of some importance, as throwing light upon the early political sentiments of his son and namesake. Young Copley was brought to England before he was five years old, but his father's affection for America, assisted probably by childish recollections of his own, tended to inspire him with a romantic admiration for the United States, and Lord Campbell has "heard him express himself in terms of affection for his native land, and speak proudly of distinguished Americans as his countrymen." A high-flown admiration of this kind, with airs of Jacobinism and the like, would sit well upon a clever youth at school and college in those years.

Copley soon gave proof of brilliant parts. At Cambridge "he was able to make a given portion of time devoted to study more available than any man in the university." But he was too easy-

mind to form the ambition of being a consummate scholar, "and he would occasionally affect to be an idler and a man of pleasure." There was something more than affectation in his display both of the one character and of the other, but it is singular that Lord Campbell, so able to detect affectation in this assumption of the character of a man of pleasure and idler, should not have suspected that there was affectation also in the young man's profession of Jacobinism. Lord Eldon, it seems, had been credibly informed that Copley in his youth danced round a tree of liberty. Like enough. A dancing acquaintance with Republicanism he maintained,—and no other. His fitful application at Cambridge sufficed to give him high rank as a mathematical wrangler, and second Smith's prizeman, and he obtained a Trinity fellowship. In 1794 he was admitted a member of Lincoln's Inn, and after studying for some time under "Mr. Tidd, the famous special pleader," commenced special pleading on his own account. It was at this time that an intimacy, continued for upwards of sixty years, sprang up between him and John, afterwards Lord Campbell, the conscientious chancellor and painful biographer. Copley was Campbell's senior, and his university reputation and eminence as a debating-society orator gave him a position among the legal aspirants of Lincoln's Inn, to which Campbell could only look up with "the most profound reverence and admiration." Copley, always the kindest of men, cast a friendly eye upon plain John, and "would ask me to call upon him." Campbell was then, what he continued to be to the day of his death,—an irreproachable, unchangeable, cast-iron Whig,—a Whig, and nothing more. Copley, to his horror, "was a Whig, and something more, or in one word, a Jacobin." Campbell had doubtless heard him own as much in conversation, and the severe biographer adds circumstantial evidence of the fact. "He would refuse to be present at a dinner given on the return of Mr. Fox for Westminster, but he delighted to dine with the "Corresponding Society," or to celebrate the anniversary of the acquittal of Hardy and Horne Tooke." Furthermore, before commencing his forensic career, he travelled in America in company with Volney, the renowned free-thinker. Of this circumstance, amply attested otherwise, Campbell omits mention, but, had he noticed it, he would unquestionably have pronounced it an important item of evidence in support of the charge of Republican and revolutionary sentiments which he brings against Copley. On his return from America, Copley was called to the bar by the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn. This event took place in 1804. He joined the Midland Circuit; but though his ability was acknowledged, his professional success was limited, and his prospects were not bright.

Suddenly the gates of promotion were flung wide open to him. Having attracted the attention of ministers, either by his masterly defence of the demagogue Watson, tried for high-treason, or by his skilful management of some other case, he was offered a Government

seat in the House of Commons, and took his place behind Liverpool and Castlereagh as the docile and thorough-going defender of their policy. The borough for which he sat was Yarmouth, in the Isle of Wight. His age on entering the House of Commons was forty-five.

Of the character of this proceeding Lord Campbell professes to entertain no doubt whatever. "A seat in the House of Commons,"—these are his words,—“for a Government borough was proposed without any express condition or promise as to services or reward; nevertheless, with the clear, reciprocal understanding that the ‘Convertite’ was thenceforth to be a thick-and-thin supporter of the Government, and that everything in the law which the Government had to bestow should be within his reach.” Nor is Lord Campbell by any means alone in pronouncing him a Rat. During Copley’s whole career as a party politician, the charge was at intervals hurled at him sometimes with circumstances of gross insolence. When he canvassed Cambridge University and applied for a vote to Musgrave, afterwards Archbishop of York, the reply was, “I, sir, am a Whig still.” Musgrave’s dog lay under the chair in which Copley was sitting, and either Musgrave or one of his friends cried out, “Take care of that dog; he’s a terrible fellow for vermin!”* In one of the debates on the Reform Bill, Earl Grey stated his belief that, at one period of his life, Lord Lyndhurst had entertained opinions favourable to Parliamentary Reform. “Never!” exclaimed the latter. “Lord Denman,” adds Lord Campbell, “who had gone the circuit with Lyndhurst, and full well knew what those opinions had been, was then standing by me. Shaking his fist in a manner which made me afraid that he would draw upon himself the notice of the House, he exclaimed, ‘Villain! lying villain!’”

Notorious as his professions of Jacobinical sentiment had been, Lyndhurst never failed to give a prompt and explicit denial to the charge of political faithlessness. The form of his denial was uniform. He challenged his accusers to prove that, before entering Parliament, he had ever belonged to a political society, or had ever pledged himself to a political party. We have not seen the literal correctness of this representation disputed. Lord Campbell, while declaring that the Radicals of the day entertained vague hopes of deriving benefit from him, admits that he had no connection with them. With Whiggism as a system, or any of its proposals, whether for Parliamentary Reform or aught else, he had certainly never stated his agreement, and Lord Campbell admits that the denial of Earl Grey’s charge, which drew forth that amazing exclamation from Lord Denman, was, in the letter of it, accordant with truth. On the other hand, Lyndhurst never said that he had at no time held Jacobinical opinions. If we have rightly apprehended his character, the whole matter can be simply explained. It was not in the nature of the

* *Athenæum*, Oct. 17, 1863.

man to be seriously democratic. A gay, kindly humorist, naturally deficient in moral earnestness, his intellect icy-clear and icy-cold, his heart incapable of cruelty or malignity, but incapable also of self-sacrificing impulse or heroic enthusiasm,—he was not of the rock from which Brutus and his sons were hewn. His Jacobinism was a mere affectation; a thing to be sported at undergraduate suppers, and pleasantly available for shocking, to an exhilarating extent, the slow, grim, correct Whig, of the type of John Campbell. That a man of humour is an insoluble enigma to a man totally devoid of humour is a proposition illustrated with incomparable naïveté by Lord Campbell in his life of Lyndhurst. It is entirely evident that, after sixty years of study, Campbell had not the slightest idea what manner of man Lyndhurst was; and it is almost equally evident, from Campbell's own revelations, that Lyndhurst perfectly understood him, and charitably made allowance for the impossibility of his ever doing justice to his easy-minded friend. Lyndhurst's Republicanism, partly an accident of his association with America, was never, we expect, more than a fancy and an affectation. Even as a fancy and an affectation it had in 1817 become obsolete, for when Waterloo had been fought, and Napoleon was in St. Helena, the regeneration of Europe by Jacobinical revolution could no longer be the professed faith of a sane, educated, middle-aged Englishman. At this period Lyndhurst was forty-five years old. For the first time in his life, he reflected carefully upon politics. His sincerity, in so far as he was sincere, began at that date. From the affectation of Jacobinism he wheeled round to a loose practical profession of anti-Gallican Toryism. He joined a party which has generally been good to its servants, and his advance was rapid.

It will be understood that, in this account of Lyndhurst's much-canvassed adhesion to the party of the court, we are endeavouring to set a fact in its true light, not proposing to write a vindication. A scrupulously conscientious man, a man of deep moral feeling, could not have done as Lyndhurst did; but then, a scrupulously conscientious man could not have held or professed Jacobinical opinions, in the way and in the sense in which Lyndhurst had professed them. Jacobinism had been with him a thing of accident, and a thing of humour; perhaps also a kind of intellectual by-play, an exercise of the speculative faculties, like the "strong Republicanism" which Halifax professed while fighting the battles of the court. With the actual phenomena of English politics at the time it had no connection whatever. It left him open to an offer from any party. Had an eligible offer come from the Whigs it is not impossible that he might have accepted it; intellectually he had much in common with such a Whig as Sir James Mackintosh, or such a Whig as Sydney Smith; but there was also much in Whiggism to repel him, its logic-grinding, its arid economics, its hard work, its delight in formulas, its pedagogic

omniscience, and priggish patriotism; in one word, its lack of humour. Not becoming a Whig, he thenceforth hated Whiggism as much as it was in his nature to hate anything. A Whig was always the chosen butt of his ridicule. To laugh at men and things all round, his own party and himself included, was indeed his habit; but a laugh was most pleasant when it was at the expense of a Whig. We shall look in vain in Lyndhurst for that elevation of character which is derived from the association of splendid intellectual faculties with high moral feeling. Without this association no character can permanently impress mankind with reverence, no career can possess true grandeur. Lyndhurst's brain was equal to any undertaking. Again and again Lord Campbell speaks of his quickness of apprehension, his amplitude and clearness of memory, as verging on miracle. But that glow of moral earnestness, that sacred fervour of intense and lofty emotion, which to the highway dust of commonplace intellectual faculties has often lent a radiance as of clouds transfigured in the fiery light of dawn, never warmed the iceberg splendour of the intellect of Lyndhurst.

Few periods in our history are more dreary and disastrous than that at which Serjeant Copley took his place on the right hand of Mr. Speaker as a supporter of his Majesty's ministers. The enthusiasm of the nation fed by victory after victory, the artificial prosperity of the possessors and occupiers of land, the maintenance at the public expense of a much larger proportion of population, in the capacity of soldiers, than could be kept under arms in time of peace, all had contributed to inspire the Tory party with a sense of security in their position, with a confidence in their prospects, and an imperious desire to maintain the status quo. The leaders had probably expected that, with the return of peace, the country would at once enter upon an era of prosperity, more brilliant even than the precarious and hollow prosperity which had deceived them during the war. They found themselves mistaken. There was a collapse of the high prices which had so long ravished the hearts of farmer and landlord; and, at the same time, tens of thousands of the populace were thrown out of employment. It was, perhaps, pardonable in them to hear first the cry of their most devoted supporters, and to hurry up a legislative contrivance, by which landlords might obtain as high rents, and agriculturists as high prices, as they had obtained during the continuance of hostilities. But, unhappily, the means by which they sought to relieve their political body-guard were of fatal effect upon the nation in general. The pernicious results of a system of commercial and agricultural restriction are great at any time; but under the circumstances in which Great Britain was then placed, the policy of the Protectionists,—and Whigs and Tories then believed in protection,—was literally to lock the granaries of the world in the face of a starving people. What followed was a matter of course. The starving multitude became disaffected; seditious gatherings were

held; insurrectionary risings were attempted. The mob and their leaders might give what account of themselves they pleased; might talk of liberty, Magna Charta, and the rights of man; but the essential meaning of the malcontents was that which Shakspeare has put into articulate speech in the mouths of the starving Romans in "Coriolanus:"—

"They said they were an-hungry; sighed forth proverbs;
That Hunger broke stone walls; that dogs must eat;
That meat was made for mouths; that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only."

The mistake of Liverpool, Castlereagh, and a host of men abler than Liverpool and Castlereagh, was to confound the mere inarticulate wailing and raging of a populace suffering from cleanness of teeth with that terrible swell of opinion, rising from unfathomable depths, bearing along with it the vast majority of thinking men, billowing slowly on and becoming at last irresistible, which announces that the institutions peculiar to an era have exhausted their vitality, and that the storm-wind of revolution is about to sweep them away. To distinguish between a bread-riot and a national revolution would seem to be no difficult operation; but if we may judge from the eminence of those who have quite failed to draw the distinction between the two, it is less easy than it appears. The Ministry which enrolled Serjeant Copley among its parliamentary supporters, and whose brief he held with zealous complacency while they remained in power, firmly believed, when bread-riots disturbed the provinces, that the foundations of the monarchy were being shaken. They had recourse to repressive legislation of the most violent kind. They restricted the liberty of the press, curtailed the right of public meeting, indicted as felons all who dared to express political sentiments which they considered dangerous, and when crowds of hungry operatives and their wives poured into the streets, drove them to their cellars again at the point of the sword.

Copley, whose first reward for good conduct was the chief-justiceship of Chester, and who had been but two years in Parliament when he became Solicitor-General, caught the tune of his new friends to perfection. "Was all the experience," he asked, "derived from the course and progress of the French Revolution to be lost to the world? Who did not know that at the commencement of that revolution a large part of France was not alienated from the existing Government? Who did not know that it was only in the great manufacturing and populous districts in France that disaffection originally manifested itself, and that to the inertness of the friends of monarchy in the other parts of that kingdom the deplorable consequences that followed were attributable?" When we recollect that, only twenty-five years before this was said, the Terror was at its height in Paris, and the skins of political victims were being tanned

into glove leather at Meudon, we cannot wonder that the opinion expressed, whether it was altogether believed by the keen, clear, and sagacious speaker or not, acted as a spell upon an audience of British respectables. Even at the present day, when we are three quarters instead of one quarter of a century removed from the days of the French Revolution, talk of the kind is indulged in. Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh firmly believed it in 1818. And so the hunger-bitten weavers of Peterloo were sabred because the Convention, with France in arms behind it, had trampled the outworn feudalism of France into the dust.

Meanwhile the prosperous lawyer, Sir John Copley, Solicitor-General, had not been so absorbed in public affairs as to be unable to attend to others of a more pleasing nature. In his forty-seventh year he fell in love with a widow of twenty-three, distinguished for her beauty and vivacity, whose husband, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas, had been killed in the battle of Waterloo. He was married to her in March, 1819. He continued to reside in George Street, Hanover Square, in the house which had been occupied by his father, and which he enlarged, and splendidly fitted up for the reception of his wife. "Lady Copley," says Lord Campbell, "was exceedingly handsome, with extraordinary enterprise and cleverness. She took the citadel of fashion by storm, and her concerts and balls, attended by all the most distinguished persons who could gain the honour of being presented to her, reflected back new credit and influence on her enraptured husband." We hear afterwards of "jealousies and bickerings between them." Lyndhurst, though of a temper which could not be permanently ruffled, and incapable of deep resentment as well as of wanton insult or deliberate cruelty, was no model of the domestic virtues. His moral code was not austere. In an influential periodical, commenting upon his history at the time of his death, we meet with the following remark. "His true biography,—one of his private as well as his public life,—would form a more extraordinary volume in our social and political history than any hitherto written." The significance of the observation is evident enough; nor would it be consistent with justice to sacrifice to the demands of a fastidious decorum all reference to that laxity of private morals which was notorious to the fashionable contemporaries of Lyndhurst. The character of a man is, in fact, a unity, and it is doubtless to one cause,—defect of moral earnestness, and a weak sense of duty,—that the levity of the politician and the free-and-easy morality of the man are to be traced. His affection for his brilliant wife was, no doubt, sincere, according to its measure, and "they continued together on decent terms till her death at Paris, in 1834." His grief was real, but not very elevated or touching. The consolation to which he had recourse was not of a poetical character. "He was sitting as Chief Baron in the Court of Exchequer when he received the fatal news.

He swallowed a large quantity of laudanum, and set off to see her remains." He continued for three years to be, in Lord Campbell's phrase, a "gay widower," and then "fell in love with a beautiful Jewess," and married her. The courtship took place in Paris; the honeymoon was spent at Fontainebleau. "Although the new Lady Lyndhurst, like her predecessor, tried to become a leader of fashion, she preserved an unsuspected reputation, and took devoted care of her husband."

Lord Lyndhurst's tastes were ostentatious and expensive, and he was, as we should have expected, remiss and heedless in money matters. There were tales of executions being put into his house, and sheriff's officers being in attendance in the guise of waiters, while he exhibited to distinguished guests the accomplishments of his French cook and Italian confectioner. But he expressly denied having at any time incurred debts which he could not pay, and Lord Campbell, who omits no ascertained fact that tells to his discredit, treats these reports as fabrications. What Lord Campbell does not conceal, though the surly virtue of the biographer makes but cold acknowledgment of it, is that, as a host and social companion, Lyndhurst was the most charming of men. His manner captivated all whom he cared to gain, and his thorough geniality and merry-heartedness derived an exquisite flavour from the banter, always keen and sparkling, never malignant, which he poured forth in floods of gay mockery upon men and things. "He was accustomed, when conversing with political opponents, to abuse and laugh at his own colleagues and associates, and above all to abuse and laugh at the rivals of those whom he was addressing. Yet such,"—the words are Lord Campbell's,—"was his tact, that I never knew him brought into any scrape by this lingual license." The cause seems to have been that he was as severe upon himself as upon others, and was always of Wilson's opinion, that if there are thoughts too deep for tears, there are none too deep for laughter. "It was expedient," says the canny biographer, in describing Lord Lyndhurst's reception of his visitors, "to go late, and stay the last; for I observed the practice to be that each visitor, on departing, furnished a subject of satirical remark for the master of the house and those who remained." But it was not a Mephistophilean humour in which he jeered friend or foe. There was no gall in it. His portrait,—not that by Shee, in which the amplitude of the wig, and the proximity of the great seal, have oppressed the faculties of the Royal Academician, but one in which the artist has ventured to represent the man as well as the clothes,—is not the portrait of a Mephistophiles. It is a mocking, but a genial spirit, that looks out of the eyes. There is cunning in the face; there is refined voluptuousness; there is indolence; there is thorough worldliness, but good-tempered, smiling, carelessly contemptuous, not rancorous or avaricious worldliness. We detect a trace of melancholy in the eyes, as

if in half-cynical acknowledgment that there is, after all, marvellously little to be had at the world's banquet, fierce as we are in fighting for good places at the table. When Lord Campbell was appointed Chief Justice, Lyndhurst, then near eighty, invited him to dinner, and desiring him to fill a bumper of still champagne, said to him, "Here, Campbell, in this loving cup let us drown for ever our animosities." From that time they had no quarrels, and Lord Campbell might have had a warmer recollection of the moment when writing the biography of his friend.

As Solicitor-General, Sir John Copley appeared for the Crown against Queen Caroline. On him, as pitted against Brougham, who was her Majesty's Attorney-General, the promoters of the Bill against the Queen mainly depended. His speech, which took two days in delivery, is a characteristic and masterly performance. Not contesting the palm of impetuous rhetoric and splendid declamation with his antagonist, he addressed himself to the convincing argumentation of the case, adding link to link in the chain of evidence, and coldly coiling it round his victim. Now that the hubbub raised by the quarrel between George IV. and Queen Caroline has passed into dead silence, and the furious passions which were arrayed on the opposing sides have ceased to agitate any human breast, it will, we think, be generally admitted that Copley had a right to the favourable decision of the tribunal before which he pleaded. If Caroline was not positively criminal, her folly had been so extravagant, her imprudence so glaring, her want of all sense of what was due to herself and her station so offensive, that she could not expect, in the ordinary course of human affairs, to escape severe social chastisement. The confused British public had probably a notion of this; but they felt that, if Caroline had been a bad wife, George had been a worse husband, and so they took the woman's part. At all events, no candid hearer or reader of the Solicitor-General's speech could maintain that Caroline of Brunswick had conducted herself in a manner worthy of a Queen of England. The opinion of shrewd contemporary judges was also, we suspect, that, in solid ability, the Solicitor-General of the King had the advantage of the Attorney-General of the Queen. The oracular estimate of the former as superior to the latter, stated in the words "Copley is his master," which we find in the "*Noctes Ambrosianæ*," may have been due in part to the Tory prejudices of Wilson, but was more than the mere boast of a partisan.

The Bill against the Queen was abandoned by the Government, after a small majority of the Lords had read it for a second time, but Copley's speech obtained him the strong personal favour of George IV. In 1824 he exchanged the office of Solicitor-General for the more honourable post of Attorney-General, and his political importance in the House of Commons became very great. The office of Chancellor, still held by Lord Eldon, was now the immediate object of

his ambition, and although, by accepting the Mastership of the Rolls, which he did in 1826, he might seem to be contenting himself with a lower station, he was in reality bringing all his energies to bear upon the attainment of a seat on the woolsack.

Between the advocates and the opponents of Roman Catholic emancipation, whose long controversy was now approaching a crisis, there was no difference which could occasion difficulty to the Master of the Rolls. He had surmounted all conscientious scruples, if he ever entertained any, as to speaking to the brief of the political party which could see him best, and if the anti-Catholics could smooth his way to the great seal, he was prepared to become their very humble servant. He avowed in conversation while Lord Liverpool was in power, and while Catholic emancipation was an open question in the Cabinet, that he had no decided opinions upon the subject, and would be guided in his parliamentary conduct relating to it by circumstances. On the other hand, the course most agreeable to himself would have been to concede all political privileges to the Roman Catholics, for he did not affect any tincture of bigotry; and to his sceptical and refining intellect the religious differences which divided Christendom were of the least possible importance.

In the beginning of 1827 the illness of Lord Liverpool, from which it was known that recovery was impossible, set the whole machinery of political intrigue in motion. Canning and Peel were the competitors for the Premiership, and Copley had to consider how the great seal could be most adroitly angled for on his own behalf. King George was willing that the question of emancipation should be left open in the Cabinet, but declared that he must have an anti-Catholic keeper of his conscience. The Master of the Rolls decided, therefore, to hoist the Protestant banner. Dr. Philpotts, subsequently Bishop of Exeter, had issued a pamphlet in which the anti-Catholic arguments were vigorously set forth. Copley, appropriating the results of the Doctor's toil, regaled the political predecessors of Mr. Whalley and Mr. Newdegate in the House of Commons with an edifying homily upon the dangers to which the Protestantism of England was exposed, the necessity of standing firm in "this crisis of our religion," the "thralldom which our ancestors successfully resisted," and to which, the speaker trusted, "we, their descendants, will never submit." The Acts of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, the religious violence of the reign of Mary, the persecutions in the Netherlands, the treacherous massacres in France, the possibility of the Inquisition being introduced into Great Britain, were all done justice to by this Protestant champion. "The Catholic religion," he said, "is still unchanged, and the same power to effect mischief is still in existence." How admirably the dexterous rogue had learned his lesson! While he was still on his legs, however, Canning pen-

cilled on a slip of paper, and passed along the benches these lines of a popular ditty;—

“Dear Tom, this brown jug that now foams with mild ale,
Out of which I now drink to sweet Nan of the Vale,
Was once Toby Philpott’s.”

But King George was taken in. So staunch a Protestant could be trusted to keep a conscience even if so delicately sensitive and so sweetly pure as his. Accordingly, when Canning became Premier and Eldon left the marble chair, Copley was invited to mount the wool-sack. This was in April, 1827. He was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Lyndhurst of Lyndhurst. “Every one,” says Lord Campbell, “friend or foe, had a fling at him; but, on account of his brilliant talents and his delightful manners, the appointment was by no means unpopular.”

Drudgery of all kinds was Lord Lyndhurst’s aversion; nor, if we have struck the true key-note in delineating his character, was it in him to be supremely moved by that passion for work well done which reigns in all sound and masculine natures. As Chancellor, while displaying in individual judgments an ability never surpassed, and making everything pleasant for the profession by his urbanity, temper, and good sense, he will be admitted to have shirked business as far as was plausibly possible, and to have generally contented himself with putting a face on things. Previously to his elevation, he had repeatedly called the attention of Parliament to the subject of Chancery Reform, insinuating, with deft irony, that Lord Eldon stood in the way of its being effected. When his official career had closed, and he was the Nestor of the House of Lords, Chancery Reform still remained to be effected, and Lord Lyndhurst was eloquent in calling upon other people to effect it, and in declaring that it was urgent and easy. “The urgency,” replied Lord Truro, “I do not deny; but can hardly think the remedy is so easy, or the noble and learned lord, who has been four times Chancellor, would not have been so often and so long in office without proposing one, instead of leaving the task entirely to his successors.” These words throw light over wide spaces of Lord Lyndhurst’s biography, and go far to revealing what manner of man he was.

The ministry of Canning fell to pieces; the ministry of Lord Goderich, who made a futile attempt for a few months after the death of Canning to hold the reins of power, fell to pieces; but the Chancellor, retaining his self-possession in every change, was at the ear of majesty to suggest, when Goderich threw up the cards, that the Duke of Wellington should be sent for. “Let him come to me,” said the King, “as soon as possible; but remember, whoever is to be Minister, you, my lord, must remain my Chancellor.” Lyndhurst, accordingly, saw his name at the head of the list of the new Cabinet. As he had never resigned the great seal, there seems no reason why

Lord Campbell and others should call his tenure of office under Wellington a second Chancellorship.

Sir Robert Peel had now become the most powerful political personage in England, and was the mainspring of the Wellington Cabinet. He made up his mind that the claims of the Catholics could no longer be resisted, and Wellington acceded to his views. Lyndhurst's anti-Catholic zeal evaporated in a moment, and he professed himself an earnest emancipationist. When Peel and Wellington went to Windsor to have their famous interview with George IV. on the Catholic claims, they took the favoured keeper of the royal conscience along with them to assist them in dealing with the scruples of that religious mind. He now pleaded the Catholic cause with much animation in the House of Lords, and paid off Dr. Philpotts for the honour done him in formerly stealing his arguments by elaborately refuting them. Eldon, the Cato of the vanquished cause, sometimes succeeded in turning the laugh against him. On one occasion the ex-Chancellor presented a petition against Roman Catholic emancipation from the Company of Tailors in Glasgow. "What!" said the chuckling occupant of the woolsack, "do tailors trouble themselves with such measures?" "My noble and learned friend," replied Eldon, "might have been aware that tailors cannot like turncoats." But the light effrontery of Lyndhurst carried him through everything. Arguing one day in favour of emancipation, on the ground that, in former times, Roman Catholics sat in Parliament under our Protestant Government, he was interrupted by Eldon with the question, "Did the noble and learned lord know that last year?" "I confess," was the reply, "that I did not. But, my lords, I have since been prosecuting my studies; I have advanced in knowledge; and, in my humble opinion, even the noble and learned lord might improve himself in the same way." The discomfited look of Eldon at that moment, and the roguish triumph in the face of Lyndhurst, may have recurred to some who witnessed the battles between Peel and Disraeli.

The Roman Catholics were emancipated; Sir Robert Peel had performed his first grand service to his country; and, for the first time, had given mortal offence to a large proportion of the Tory party. Before William IV. had been on the throne for a year the grumblers joined the Whigs in overthrowing the Government, and Earl Grey came into power. The excitement which had been occasioned by the Catholic question was succeeded by the deeper excitement which embodied itself in the cry for Parliamentary Reform. It has been maintained, with no great improbability, that Lyndhurst would gladly have remained Chancellor in the new Administration, and that Earl Grey would have been happy to have been delivered, by so pliant and urbane a colleague, from the necessity of introducing into his Cabinet the imperious and eccentric Brougham. But the latter was in a

position to dictate his own terms, and Lyndhurst relinquished the great seal. A story which has been told in connection with the accession of Brougham to the Chancellorship is not without interest, as showing by what infantile concerns men may be agitated, though as great and mighty as wigs can make them. It is the custom to order a new seal to be manufactured at the accession of a new Lord Chancellor. Lyndhurst left the woolsack before the new seal was ready, and Brougham claimed the old one as the sole existing seal when he found himself in office. The dispute was referred to the King. Argument was obviously inapplicable to the case, but William bethought him that the seal had two sides for two different impressions. He gave order that it should be divided, and presented one side to each of the claimants.

Earl Grey was determined, however, to be civil to Lyndhurst. As he could not be Chancellor, he was made Chief Baron of the Exchequer. It seems to have been expected that he would show himself friendly to Ministers in instances where considerations of party policy did not intervene. His complete independence was at all events secured. Even Lord Campbell explicitly admits that there was no compact, tacit or understood, this time. The Chief Baron of the Exchequer became the most formidable opponent of Reform in the Upper House, and as the arena of the Upper House was that in which alone the most enthusiastic opponent of the Bill could hope for success, he became for a time one of the most important public men in the kingdom. His argumentation against the Bill was in part feeble and conventional, in part ingenious, and not without a spice of true insight and sound political philosophy. It was feeble and conventional when it was but a repetition of the parrot-cry that the Reformers were the advocates of subversive revolution. "I do not," he said, "charge the Ministers with having introduced the Bill for the purpose of subverting our form of Government; but such will be its certain effect. You are called upon to open the flood-gates which will admit the torrent of democratic power. That torrent will rush in and overpower us." But there was more in Lyndhurst's speeches,—perhaps, on the whole, the ablest in which Parliamentary Reform has ever been opposed,—than this. He dwelt with skill upon the complex composition of the old House of Commons, the adaptation it had gradually attained during many centuries to the various interests of the nation at home and abroad, and the difficulty and risk of applying to it theoretic principles of uniform representation. These views may not be altogether unworthy of consideration even in the present day; not as having any tendency to prove that the number of the electors ought to be curtailed, but as containing useful hints for the guidance of electors in performing their duty; as inculcating the importance of a large and intelligent apprehension on their part of the requirements of the empire, and as warning them against the possible issue of

Parliamentary Reform in dreary government by directors of joint-stock companies, railway contractors, rich manufacturers, successful tradesmen, and fluent lawyers.

Influenced chiefly by the eloquent appeals of Lyndhurst, the Lords threw out the Bill on the second reading by a majority of forty-one. But Earl Grey knew that he had a nation at his back, and did not flinch. The session was closed; after a brief recess the Lords and Commons were recalled to Westminster; and the Bill again presented itself in the Upper House for acceptance or rejection. The party of resistance trusted in Lord Lyndhurst, and did his bidding. The second reading was carried by a majority of nine. Lyndhurst then executed his famous manœuvre of proposing that the consideration of the disfranchising clauses should be postponed until the enfranchising clauses were disposed of. His object was to evade disfranchisement to an extent which would have destroyed the measure. The Lords accepted his proposal by a large majority, and he exclaimed in great glee, "Grey is checkmated." The expression proves that he did not know who was the foe arrayed against him. It was not to Grey, but to a nation in a state of vehement excitement, that checkmate was to be given. Earl Grey stood to his colours. The King was called upon to create a sufficient number of peers to secure a majority in favour of the Bill. He declined; and the resignation of the Cabinet was instantly put into his hands.

The King sent to Lyndhurst, and consulted him as to the formation of a new Government. The Chief Baron undertook the business. He applied to Peel, but the real statesman saw how the land lay, and refused to have any connection with the project. The Duke of Wellington, who, as a politician, never quite understood the nation, agreed to take office, and the magnanimous Lyndhurst, contenting himself with the great seal, yielded the premiership to his grace. The wiser Tories saw through the whole affair, but respectable mediocrities were found to fill the various offices of administration, and for a day or two Lyndhurst probably imagined that he had become the most powerful man in the realm. But less than a week's time was sufficient to undeceive him. A hurricane began to pipe in every part of the United Kingdom, the first notes of which frightened him out of his imaginary dignity, and made the Lords glad enough to register the Bill as sent to them by the Commons without note or comment. It is worthy of mention that, when the scheme of a Lyndhurst Cabinet was on the carpet, it was resolved that twelve seats in the House of Commons should be put at the disposal of his lordship, and that, in the list which he drew up of the members who were to occupy them, the first name was that of Benjamin Disraeli. The career of Mr. Disraeli, if less brilliant, might have reflected more genuine honour on himself and been of more enduring benefit

to his country, if he had learned on this occasion the difference between the dexterous intriguer and the statesman, the difference between the whisper of a faction and the voice of a people, the difference between the skilful and popular manipulation of a party and an appreciation of the true wants, together with a capacity to do the real work, of a kingdom. We presume that it can have been only at this period that there was a proposal to bring Mr. Disraeli into the House of Commons under the auspices of Lyndhurst. It is possible that there were, a few years subsequently, some obscure and abortive negotiations for the constitution of a Cabinet under Lyndhurst to deliver William IV. from the Whigs under Melbourne; but had they been of importance they could hardly have escaped Lord Campbell, who makes no mention of them; and it is highly improbable that they could have embraced the arrangement of details. This whole story, in fact, may have arisen out of the close intimacy which so long subsisted between Lord Lyndhurst and Mr. Disraeli, and its value in illustrating the extent and notoriety of their friendship is as great on the supposition of its being a fabrication as on that of its being a fact.

It is well ascertained that already an invincible repugnance had been conceived by Sir Robert Peel to Lord Lyndhurst. All the urbanity, all the complaisance, all the silver-tongued eloquence of this prince of trimmers, could not fascinate the working statesman and the honest man. Peel felt instinctively that the art of a constitutional statesman is to be in sympathy with the vital progress of the nation,—to be supremely able to do the nation's work,—to understand, to represent, to guide "the spirit of the time to come yearning to mix itself with life." Peel drew around him a staff of workers. The most brilliant genius for talk failed to attract him. He was therefore indifferent to the Addisonian periods of Lyndhurst, and refused to cheapen the glittering rhetorical wares of Disraeli. Peel and his pupil Gladstone have detested intrigue. With Lyndhurst intrigue was statemanship, and "with words," says Mr. Disraeli, "we govern men." Notions and words loved notions and words; sturdy fact stood shoulder to shoulder with sturdy fact; and so the pairs were Lyndhurst and Disraeli, Peel and Gladstone. Can we trace any likeness of Lyndhurst in the fictions of Mr. Disraeli? Not with confidence; and yet one cannot help fancying that in two of the most careful and successful portraits that ever left the easel of Mr. Disraeli, the father of Contarini Fleming, and Winter the artist-friend of the latter, traits of Lyndhurst may be discovered. In the one the clear, contemptuous, cynical, prosaic spirit of the worldling; in the other, the kind-heartedness and the sympathy with genius in its youthful extravagance, of the social humorist. May we suggest also that Mr. Disraeli is possibly indebted to the Whittington of Chancellors for the hint of that delectable picture in which he represents

the venerable keeper of the royal conscience as leading along his charge in form of a very mild donkey? What a biographic sketch Mr. Disraeli might give us of Lord Lyndhurst!

Strangely enough, Peel and Lyndhurst, though not acting in harmony, co-operated most effectually, after the overthrow of the Reform Bill, in retrieving the fortunes of the Tory party. Peel gradually won the respect and trust of the nation by the practical sagacity of his criticism of the Administration and his frank acceptance of sound measures. Lyndhurst, the Jupiter optimus maximus of the House of Lords, fought all Whig measures as Whig measures, striking with impartial thunderbolt the useful and the pernicious, the good and the bad. So the Tories had all the credit of Peel's patriotic opposition in the House of Commons, and all the benefit of Lyndhurst's factious opposition in the House of Lords. In November, 1834, King William thought that the day had come when he might escape from Whiggish bonds. Peel gallantly mounted the ear of administration, but his Government lived only long enough to be called the Government of the hundred days. Lyndhurst was Peel's Chancellor. When the Whigs came back to power, Lyndhurst recurred to his former tactics, supplementing them, by the advice of Mr. Disraeli, with his celebrated reviews of the session. Hard lines, surely, for the poor Whigs. During the session Lyndhurst smote their measures, and, with his irresistible might, hurled them down the steep of Olympus. When the session was ended, their ruthless and invulnerable adversary taunted them in stinging phrase, and exposed them to the ridicule and contempt of the public, for having failed to effect anything in the way of legislation. The enemy stole away the seed, and then fiercely demanded why there was no harvest. What a curious glimpse this gives us into the working of the parliamentary machine! At length, in 1841, Peel formed a strong Tory Government, and, until 1846, Lord Lyndhurst held the great seal.

Then ended his official career. He attempted to reconcile the Peelites and the Protectionists; but Sir Robert was cold and Lord Stanley was scornful, and he took nothing by his motion but a blow first on the one cheek, then on the other. He was now approaching his eightieth year, but his eloquence knew no eclipse. As champion of the Jews, as champion of women, as assailant of Russia, as denouncer of Prussia, he charmed England and astonished Europe by the clearness of his intellect and the nervous force of his eloquence. He spoke, and spoke with vigour, in the House of Lords, when he was eighty-eight, and ere his death in 1863 he had outlived all animosity and was treated with respect by all parties.

ST. PAUL'S AND WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

A work is in progress all over England, upon which much thought and incredible sums of money are everywhere expended. To the present generation has been allotted the task, not only of building more new churches than have been built since the Reformation, but also of restoring the older places of worship to their pristine beauty. The causes which have concurred to give to the nineteenth century at once the wish to enter upon this undertaking, and the faculty of accomplishing it upon the whole satisfactorily, are extremely complex. A reaction against the influence of the Renaissance upon art, a spiritual revival in a religious establishment which had for a while slumbered and slept, a growingly favourable appreciation of the characteristics of the Middle Ages, a newly scrupulous attention to historical accuracy, a re-awakened capacity for the enjoyment of form and colour,—are some of the tendencies of the present age which have brought about so conspicuous a result. The movement is very widely spread. The clergy whose excess of Ritualism perplexes their bishops and scandalises their flocks, may be regarded as marching on its extreme right; the Nonconformists who build Early English meeting-houses, and the Presbyterians who introduce organ-playing into their kirks, occupy its left wing; while the centre is composed of the compact ranks of Churchmen who, neither hasting nor resting, build new churches and restore old ones all over the kingdom. The directly religious result of the multiplication and beautifying of places of worship is of course important, but the effect thus produced upon the taste and imagination of the people is also well worthy of consideration.

The stimulus given to artists by profession is of course enormous. Sir Christopher Wren "was content to be dragged up in a basket three times a week to the top of St. Paul's, at a great hazard, for £200 a year," but the great architects of to-day make fortunes which amply reward their foreign travels and home studies; and the various subsidiary arts,—sculpture, wood-carving, iron-working, tile-designing,—all share in the general prosperity. Nor is the stimulus confined to those whose profit, as well as their delight, lies in conceiving and carrying out the changes demanded by the age. The men who set these in motion are of necessity themselves possessed with artistic zeal. They are enthusiastic archæologists, learned ecclesiologists, quick to detect and anxious to preserve any relic of antiquity, and eager to equal the beauties of old times in the structures of to-day. Persons, too, who are neither professional artists nor archæological patrons,

share, nevertheless, in the benefits conferred by this ecclesiastical activity. So far, at least, as the work is well done, even the casual spectator will be the better for seeing it. Even if he have a soul blind as yet to grace of form and glory of colour, he will still learn valuable lessons from the honesty of the construction, the solidity of the materials, the adaptation of means to ends, which he can scarcely fail to notice. All this is most excellent moral teaching, and none the less so because enforced in other than pulpit dialect. The civilising effect of the higher excellences of architecture can hardly be over-estimated.

The good work is, however, open to two objections. The first is grounded upon the fact that it has been taken in hand and carried nearly through within the space of a few years, so that the work has perhaps been done hastily, before the principles of mediæval architecture were sufficiently understood. Had the nation been rich enough and zealous enough to restore our churches fifty years ago, it is appalling to think what must have been the result; and how can we be certain that our grandchildren will regard our architecture with more respect than we entertain for that prevalent at the beginning of the century? In so limited a time, also, there has been hardly scope for a sufficient variety of talent. The work has been in too few hands to be everywhere vigorous and various. In the second place, such an undertaking must always be associated with the obliteration, for archæological and æsthetical reasons, of the traces of many a stage of history which had set its mark upon the churches between their building and the present time. Within the limits of the Gothic period all additions to, and deviations from, the original plan of the builder are generally acknowledged to be interesting and beautiful; the intrusion of frigid classicalities,—urns, pediments, and draperies,—is as generally condemned; what shall we say of the picturesque singers'-galleries, squires'-pews, and other traces of the village life of the last two centuries? Go they must in the end, for they are architecturally indefensible; but that they should go all at once all over the country is not a matter of unmixed gratulation. We do not relish the notion of at once arriving at the point of being able to predict unerringly the whole arrangements of a church before we enter it. Must we always henceforth see the nave everywhere occupied by low seats of stained deal, the pulpit on one side of the chancel arch, and the reading-desk on the other, gilt iron music-stands for the singing boys in the chancel, and polished tiles in the neighbourhood of the altar?

These are, however, objections to details of restoration. The fundamental objection to the whole system will best be stated in the words of a high authority on such subjects:—"Do not let us talk, then, of restoration. The whole thing is a Lie from beginning to end. You may make a model of a building as you may of a corpse, and your model may have the shell of the old walls within it as your cast might have

the skeleton, with what advantage I neither care nor see ; but the old building is destroyed, and that more totally and mercilessly than if it had sunk into a heap of dust, or melted into a mass of clay : more has been gleaned out of desolated Nineveh than ever will be out of rebuilt Milan. But, it is said, there may come a necessity for restoration ! Granted. Look the necessity full in the face, and understand it on its own terms. It is a necessity for destruction, accept it as such, pull the building down, throw its stones into neglected corners, make ballast of them, or mortar, if you will ; but do it honestly, and do not set up a Lie in their place."—(The Seven Lamps, p. 180.)

As a rebuke to ruthless reconstruction, the words of Mr. Ruskin are words in season ; as a general condemnation of the restoration of old fabrics they scarcely need a reply. Were it financially possible, it could not be artistically desirable, that whenever a church becomes unsafe beyond the help of wooden props and iron ties, it should be left to become a picturesque ruin, by the side of which is to be constructed such a substitute as can now-a-days be devised. Just such a state of things existed quite lately in Wales. Within the decaying arches of a roofless nave stood a shabby Greek temple in stucco, which was dignified by the name of Llandaff Cathedral. This state of things exists no longer, but its perpetrators might have found in the passage quoted above a more ingenious defence than could ever have occurred to their unaided intellects. We cannot even concede that when old carving or other decorative work has fallen into hopeless decay, it is to be left a fragmentary eyesore, or to be removed, thus leaving its place vacant for ever. Over-haste in restoration, and its necessary concomitant, carelessness, are, however, evils worthy of the onslaught of our great art-critic. A dull uniformity of result, a machine-like accuracy of execution, are qualities which the science and wealth of modern times can any day call into activity ; not so the thorough workmanship, the independent thought, the religious imagination of men who believed in the facts which the work of their hands symbolised.

Not a few of the English cathedrals have lost much both in artistic beauty and in historical interest from the too great zeal of restorers to see all things accomplished in their own day. Much has been done that had better have been left undone, and much that should have been attempted by gradual essays in successive years has been coarsely accomplished at one effort. Time-worn statues have been replaced by mechanically chiselled modern images, and the still beautiful though blurred foliage of many an ancient capital has been scraped down to a new surface by sacrilegious modern hands.

Some suspicion seems at last to be gaining ground that these processes have been carried too far. Cries of distress have from time to time appeared in the newspapers at the removal of the statues of the Kings from Lincoln, at the replacement of the Courtenay tomb at Exeter ; and even parish churches have sometimes found advocates to

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stand between them and the destroyer. Some of the inhabitants of Bosham, in Sussex, actually objected to a "restoration,"—so called,—which involved the destruction of their parish church, except the chancel, and the building of a new one at a distance of several miles. Bosham, we believe, has fallen, but a church in Middlesex was saved by the energy of its friends. The restoration movement has done a good deal of harm at Oxford, where too many colleges have re-fronted themselves in a too similar manner. Worcester College is nearly alone in still submitting, in a neo-Gothic age, to put before the world a Palladian frontage. The authorities there have long talked of destruction and reconstruction, but as they have recently spent large sums in decorating their chapel with frescoes suitable to its present design, it may be hoped that they have adopted the wiser policy, which aims at preserving all the traces of history in architecture which are not inconsistent with a proper regard for present convenience, nor absolutely incompatible with liberally construed canons of beauty. Perhaps the best instance of a too-thorough restoration is offered by the interior of Notre Dame, at Paris. All has been done that money and skill could do, and the result is an apparently new church. The stonework throughout has been renewed or scraped, till every surface is white, every outline sharp, the termination of every vista perfectly visible; in short, mystery and grey antiquity are now no more suggested by Notre Dame than by the new church of Ste. Clotilde.

No English cathedral has probably suffered to an equal degree from the kindness which kills; but into so wide a question we have no intention of entering. We shall confine our remarks entirely to the present state and future prospects of the Cathedral of London and the Abbey of Westminster.

The capital of England is indeed fortunate in the possession of two such remarkable and characteristic specimens of the two great types of Christian places of worship, where the opposite poles of the religious mind may both of them find suitable expression for their respective aspirations. He whose worship rests with preference on the ideas of unity, order, symmetry, and sublimity, may realise these attributes to the full while kneeling beneath the dome of St. Paul's. He whose imaginative adoration delights to dwell upon beauty which begins and ends in mystery, graces perpetually renewed in forms of infinite variety, lights and shadows that seem instinct with the life and death of generations of mighty men long since departed, finds in the Royal Abbey what he will scarce find elsewhere. It is therefore worth while to consider whether we make the best of these great aids to refinement and elevation of character—whether we keep them in the highest possible state of efficiency.

It is partly our fault as a people, but it is also attributable to the management of these great churches, that so few residents in London ever pay them a visit. Country cousins, especially if children are of

the party, insist upon seeing them together with the National Gallery and Madame Tussaud's waxworks. They pace the aisles of the Abbey with some sense doubtless of the beauty of the arches and the height of the pillars, and they stare up into the dome of St. Paul's and repeat that it is nearly as big as that of St. Peter's at Rome ; but in either case the impression carried away is that of a chilly stone building of unintelligible plan, with no obvious analogy to the parish church at home, crowded and blocked up with every conceivable variety of attitudinizing sculpture.

Were St. Paul's as good a specimen of Renaissance as Westminster is of Gothic architecture, it could never equal it in historical interest. Not only, however, is St. Paul's in a comparatively debased style, and comparatively modern in date, but while the Abbey is placed in the very seat of Government, and in close neighbourhood to the haunts of fashion, St. Paul's stands in a quarter of the town which daily becomes more and more a congeries of gigantic warehouses, less and less a place where men live and die. The City is a workshop whither merchants and clerks and stockjobbers, of all degrees, find their way every morning, but which they as regularly leave every evening for their distant homes. The Lord Mayor still gives banquets at the Mansion House, and the lawyers are still periodically attracted to Guildhall ; but the City Law Courts are destined to move westwards, and the Mayoralty will hardly last for ever in its present shape ; so that the City will become more and more a mere Exchange, crowded during certain hours of the day by those who make money there, but deserted from dusk to dawn, and from Saturday night to Monday morning.

St. Paul's is, however, well worth making the most of.

In the first place it is worth seeing from a distance. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company present their passengers, just as the trains approach or leave the southern entrance to the Blackfriars Station, with a magnificent view of the Cathedral, surrounded by the attendant spires of the parish churches. But the imposing glimpse of the dome and west front, which used to be caught from Farringdon Street, has been much interfered with by the monstrous iron bridge which the same company has thrown across Ludgate Hill. A good deal of attention is now, however, given to this sort of thing, and the public will probably gain more views than it will lose by the extensive changes now in progress.

Of the exterior of the Cathedral it will be sufficient to observe, that some of the soot might surely be removed without much expense. The Marble Arch in Hyde Park looks much better for its thorough washing, and why should not the whole Cathedral, by an occasional vigorous application of the hose, be made to present as clean an appearance as those portions which are most exposed to the weather?

The iron railings which subdivide the open space before the west front should be removed entirely, and the gates in the outer railings

should be open all day, to admit not only foot passengers, but also carriages. The great flight of steps would look as imposing again were it dotted over with human beings. Above all, the western doors should be thrown open. Unless people can enter by the western doors of a cathedral, its nave is almost entirely useless. At present the public are ordinarily admitted at the north transept; they find themselves at once beneath the dome, the choir has the effect of a large side chapel on their left, and on their right stretches a long dingy vault leading to nothing, which is in truth the nave. Were this otherwise managed, were people admitted by the western doors, the nave would at once have a meaning, its arcaded length and comparative lowness would prepare the mind for the height and spaciousness of the dome; while the choir, with its richer decoration, would from the first lead the eye onward, and proclaim its true character. In short, the visitor would perceive at once both the analogy and the superiority of St. Paul's Cathedral to an ordinary parish church.

Let us suppose then that we have entered by the western doors. On the side chapels, on the tombs in general, and those of Nelson and Wellington in particular, we have no space to enlarge, but will merely observe that many of the togged statues and classical cenotaphs, which are so much in the way at Westminster, would be less out of place here than in their present position. When we arrive at the dome, we begin to see traces of the good work of the late Dean. The pulpit and the great organ remind us that the area under the dome is no longer useless and meaningless; while the specimens of mosaic which enrich the spandrels of the arches console us with the hope of better things to come. The authorities of the Cathedral are upon the right track, but they have not yet attained to perfection. The style of decoration adopted for the vaultings both of dome and choir might surely be improved upon. Gilding and white paint are cold, and suggestive of the upholsterer; a more courageous generation will probably venture upon a great deal more positive colour. The organ screen, which formerly closed the entrance to the choir, has very properly been removed, but nothing has as yet taken its place; what is needed is evidently a low and very rich iron-work screen. The stall-work of the choir is fine and appropriate, and it is only just that part of the church which should be most magnificent that is the most disappointing. The apse at the east end is mean, dingy, and hardly visible through the thick London air. It is here, however, that, quite apart from any ecclesiastical theories, something is required which shall naturally attract the eye the moment any one enters the church. The apse windows should be filled with rich stained glass, the eastern wall should be hung with tapestry, the communion-table should be on a scale and at an elevation commensurate with the church, and so covered and with such accessories as should from far off convey to the mind an impression of grandeur and magnificence.

But, in fact, the choir is too long; and the best effect might possibly be produced by placing the communion-table under a baldachino, at some distance from the eastern wall.

Much of what has been said about St. Paul's applies with equal force to Westminster Abbey.

Good points of view of the exterior should be secured at the national expense. A fine view is now obtainable from Bridge Street, in consequence of the demolitions which have taken place between that street and New Palace Yard. The space near the Westminster Crimean memorial is tolerably extensive; but Government should have interfered to prevent the new houses in Victoria Street from being built to such a height as to dwarf the Abbey towers. The space now occupied by the Law Courts will, it may be hoped, when they are removed, remain open; so that St. Stephen's Square, where the statue of *Cœur de Lion* stands, would no longer be isolated from Parliament Street. This might indeed become a very noble square, could the mean buildings opposite the Houses of Parliament be removed, so as to bring to light the Chapter House, the little cloisters, and the Jewell House. These, with the other dependencies of the Abbey, would form a varied boundary which would well oppose the straight line of the Parliament palace.

Perhaps the reform most urgently needed at the Abbey is the opening of the western door as the ordinary entrance of the public. It is needless to add that the incredibly mean iron railings outside this entrance should be cleared away entirely. The next step should be to remove the stucco screen which shuts off the choir. The visitor then, having effected his entrance by the western door, would have a view, interrupted only by the altar-screen, of the whole length of the church up to the belt of eastern windows, beyond the Confessor's shrine. A stranger entering by Poets' Corner, especially in the present barricaded state of the church, attains only by slow degrees to a true conception of the plan of the building, which, were it entered from the west, as is the case with almost every other cathedral in England, would be obvious at once. The choir should be parted from the nave only by an iron grille, such as that which now divides it from the transepts; and it might probably be very much shortened with advantage. If it took in only two bays west of the transept, it would amply suffice for the accommodation of the whole corporate body of the Cathedral and school. The apsidal space east of the transept would of itself make a very sufficient choir, such as that of Milan Cathedral, were it not cut in two by the shrine which defines the shrine of St. Edward. At any rate the beadle might be turned out of the altar space, which he at present monopolises during divine service; the choir might be confined to the clergy and singers, while the congregation, instead of looking at each other across the transept, might be seated on chairs in the nave, seeing and hearing

all that goes on in the choir, and in the right position for enjoying the beauty of the arches as they converge towards the apse. The communion-table and its accessories should be rendered imposing and brilliant in proportion to the size of the church.

The "altar-piece" recently erected has happily superseded one of artificial stone, quite unworthy of its position, although even this was less out of keeping with the building than the "elegant composition of classic orders," which was presented by Queen Anne. A plate of this may be seen in Beales's "*History of Westminster Abbey.*" It is, by-the-bye, melancholy to learn, as one does from this book and from Mr. Scott's "*Gleanings,*" that to make room for coronation ceremonials sweeping destruction has often been made of stone screens and other solid portions of the Abbey. On one of these occasions the tomb of King Sebert was boarded over, and a plaster imitation of it erected, which is now alone visible.

St. Edward's Chapel should be made to look less like a lumber room. The coronation chairs might be protected from desecration by something less hideous than a dirty wooden rail, and if the apsidal arches require support this should always be given by iron rods rather than, as now, by unsightly wooden planks. The galleries of the triforium, throughout the whole church, should be fitted up with ranges of seats protected by a light iron rail, as at *Nôtre Dame*. They would then add vastly to the capacity of the building for accommodating large numbers upon great occasions. Indeed, it may be laid down as a general rule, that every portion of the building which is capable of being restored to the purposes for which it was constructed, should be restored to those purposes forthwith.

The monumental nuisance should be abated. Doubtless the Abbey owes much of its interest to its mighty dead and to their memorials, even when executed in bad taste. It would be undesirable to obliterate the traces of successive centuries by banishing all monuments which are out of harmony with the building; but those which commemorate personages unknown to fame might be removed into the Abbey precincts; and some of the most gigantic and absurd of the monuments to really great men might be curtailed of their vicious exuberance. Whenever arcading, or other architectural decoration, has been cut away to make room for a monument, the offending structure should be removed or diminished, and the original decoration restored.

We have before hinted at the magnificent effect which might be produced were the irregular line of the outlying Abbey buildings brought to view, and made to form the west side of St. Stephen's Square. The interior of these buildings should also be rendered both accessible and useful. The visitor to the Abbey ought, at any rate on compliance with some trifling formalities, to be allowed to pass through such of the dependencies of a church as are not inhabited, and especially to see the Chapter House, when this beautiful building

has been completely restored to its original magnificence. Should Westminster School be, as seems likely, removed into the country, several more of the old Abbey buildings would then be available for public purposes. In the first place these should be utilised in a manner befitting their august position. If the Convocations of the clergy are to remain a part of the constitution, the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, with which that of York would probably be consolidated, could hardly find a more appropriate place of meeting than the precincts of the Abbey. The Lower House might retain the Jerusalem Chamber; the bishops might take possession of the Chapter House. In any other fine rooms which may be available should be deposited the National Portrait Gallery, which has much more affinity to English history, as enthroned at Westminster, than to art, which we may hope soon to see find a fitting palace in Trafalgar Square.

These buildings, with the connecting cloisters and chapels, having been restored to beauty, and dignified by dedication to appropriate uses, should next be rendered accessible to the public. People should be allowed to visit these scenes as far as possible by the routes which were followed by the monks of old. It seems that they used to enter the church from their dormitory by a raised platform running across the end of the chapel of St. Blaise, and leading to a door in the wall of Poets' Corner. Here they descended by a spiral staircase into the transept. The staircase having disappeared, should, of course, not be restored in stone, but should be replaced by a moveable wooden staircase.

The restoration and the reopening of the dependent buildings of the Abbey would doubtless involve considerable expense, and could perhaps only be carried out by a national subscription. It is for Government to take care that the open spaces in the neighbourhood shall be arranged so as to afford the best views of this magnificent church; and members of Parliament with any pretensions to taste should take care that Government does its duty in this respect. The approaches to Westminster Bridge, the ground now occupied by the Courts of Law, the removal of the unsightly streets which stand in the way of the new Foreign Office, should all be jealously watched, as having an important bearing, not only on the Abbey, but also upon the possibility of making Westminster the most imposing seat of government in the world.

But the reforms most urgently needed in the Abbey itself would cost but little, and are obviously within the powers of the Dean and Chapter.

We have a right to look to the present Dean to initiate the good work. No one is more vividly impressed by historical scenes, and by the traces of great men; no writer brings more of creative imagination to the task of describing the scenes or recalling the heroes to life than the author of the "*Memorials of Canterbury*," and the "*Memorials of Westminster*;" nor does any one know more of the special power of cathedrals to reproduce the lessons of the past.

To sum up the most pressing of the reforms needed at the Abbey: the western doors should be thrown open; the monumental nuisance should be abated; the triforium should be fitted up for use; the choir should be much diminished in size, devoted exclusively to the staff of the church, and should be separated from the nave only by an iron screen; the altar should be made, on purely artistic grounds, more imposing in size, and more splendid in decoration; the chapels, especially that of St. Edward, should be kept in better order. It would probably be thought best that the public should be admitted to them only under the guidance of a vergers, and the railings in front of each chapel might accordingly be kept locked; but, with this exception, the iron barricades which obstruct the church should everywhere be thrown down. As in most foreign cathedrals, it should be possible for the visitor, without molestation, to enter the Abbey by the western doors, to pass up one of the aisles, make the entire circuit of the apse, looking into, if he does not enter, the apsidal chapels, and return by the other aisle. The dismal farce of "seeing the chapels" is well known, at least to sight-seers from the country. The party of spectators having accumulated to an adequate size, the iron barrier is unlocked, the vergers on duty shuffles into his gown, and chants away at his hateful lesson. "Here you have the chapel of St. Nicholas; the first tomb is that of," &c., &c. You have just begun to get a general impression of the first tomb, and are discussing its material and date, when, the chant suddenly ceasing, you discover that all the other tombs have been described, and that your guide is waiting, with great impatience, to lock you out of the chapel, and proceed to the next. The profit, historical or artistic, which is derived from the jumble of impressions remaining on the visitor's mind, when, after galloping through all the chapels, and glancing at scores of tombs, he is ejected at the iron barrier which terminates his career, is readily calculable.

It is right to say that the Superior of the vergers, if, indeed, such be his proper style and title, is evidently a person of some taste, and is allowed some discretion as to the manner in which his subordinates shall carry out the rules of the Abbey.

It seems also to be very possible to get an order from the Dean, entitling the fortunate holder to sketch and speculate among the tombs at his leisure; but these are inadequate alleviations of the grievance complained of. It is not every one who has leisure to importune the Dean for an order, or courage to face the frowns of his officials. Freedom of worship can hardly be said to exist in London when her two great churches can be entered only by side doors, while their interiors are intersected by hideous iron fences, and vulgarised by the ubiquitous interference of the most offensive form of beadledom.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

DURING the last few months there have been several remarkable displays of the mysterious and beautiful phenomenon called the Aurora. Not only in various parts of Europe, but in Canada and the United States, the Northern Streamers have waved resplendently over the celestial dome. Magnetic changes,—true electric storms,—have passed simultaneously over the northern hemisphere, as though the system of the earth were quivering under some mysterious influence. We learn, even, that in America it was found possible last April, during the occurrence of a great auroral display, to send telegraphic messages without the aid of the wires, so sensitively did the frame of the earth respond to the magnetic impulse.

The occurrence of these singular, but not wholly novel experiences, has attracted new attention to the strange phenomena of terrestrial magnetism. The bond of sympathy which unites all parts of the earth when the magnetic storm is in progress, the yet more mystical laws which associate our earth with the sun and planets through the action of similar magnetic influences, and the rhythmical regularity with which those influences wax and wane, have long been recognised as among the strangest phenomena presented by nature to man's observation. Again and again the astronomer and the physicist have studied the strange problems thus offered to them for solution. Yet always when the new manifestations of these mystic forces of nature are in progress, the subject of terrestrial magnetism is found to offer new features of interest, new matters for inquiry. It is, in fact, a subject in which, despite much that has been done, there yet remains so much to be learned and so much to be explained, that it always presents to us an aspect of novelty and freshness.

Of the Aurora Borealis as a display little need perhaps be said. Most of our readers have, we doubt not, seen the strange streamers slowly waving, unrolling, undulating, passing by almost imperceptible mutations through a hundred varieties of form, gaining and losing colour, shifting silently from place to place upon the sky, and finally vanishing as mysteriously as they had made their appearance.

In northern climes all these phenomena are exhibited with a great increase of distinctness. The narrative of the French Scientific Commission, which wintered at Bossekop in 1838-39, gives, perhaps, the fullest account of the true auroral display that has as yet been pre-

sented to the study of the physicist. We are told that the light mist, commonly seen towards the north at Bossekop, became coloured towards evening along its upper rim. The bright border grew gradually more regular, until it appeared as an arc of pale yellow. As this arc rose upward into the sky, dark streaks made their appearance, dividing the luminous matter of the arc into distinct rays. "These stretch out and draw themselves in, now slowly, now almost instantaneously; they dart, shiver, and dance,—augmenting and diminishing suddenly in splendour. The feet of the rays are always especially bright, and continue during all the display to form a shining arc, more or less regular." This arc rises slowly, and with continual undulations towards the point immediately overhead; and it is a peculiarity worth noticing that the undulations nearly always travel from east to west. Occasionally, however, there are return waves, so to speak; and the narrators say that the display is never more brilliant than when the undulations, after passing from one side of the heavens towards the other, "retrace their steps, and flow backwards to the point of departure." "At one time, the alternating movement produces the appearance as of a brilliant curtain, hung over more than half the sky, its folds agitated by winds; at others, the edges of the curtain separate from the actual horizon, and their folds become amazingly complicated, inwrapping each other, and presenting to the astonished spectator a variety of the most graceful curves."

Under favourable circumstances the intensity of the auroral light is so great that stars of the first magnitude are obliterated from view. Nor are the colours of the mysterious auroral curtain less surprising in their splendour and intensity. The base of each ray is red, the middle is green, the rest of a clear and brilliant yellow. Always the same order is presented; and the colours are always most strongly marked,—the red being like blood, the green like the emerald.

It may be interesting, before proceeding further, to inquire how far from the pole of the earth the aurora has made its appearance. The term *Aurora Borealis* is indicative, we need hardly say, of the assumed opinion that the north is the true seat of the auroral display; and, undoubtedly, it is only near the polar regions that the northern streamers can be seen in their full splendour and at short intervals. But it would be to mistake the true meaning of the phenomenon to lose sight of the fact that auroras become visible so far to the south that the portions of our atmosphere which are the seat of the electric disturbance must, in such cases, be far removed from the arctic regions. Indeed, when we remember that in the recent display of auroral action the rays have extended to the point overhead, and beyond that point towards the south, we see at once that portions of our atmosphere are lit up, which no real north polar light could possibly illuminate.

It is believed that the most southerly stations from which the Aurora Borealis has been perceived are in north latitude fourteen degrees, so that there is nothing to prevent an inhabitant of Abyssinia or of the south-central parts of India from occasionally witnessing a display of northern streamers.

The same aurora has frequently been seen over a very extended region. Kaemtz mentions, for instance, that on January 5, 1769, a beautiful aurora was seen simultaneously in France and in Pennsylvania; and that the remarkable aurora of January 7, 1831, was seen from all parts of central and northern Europe, in Canada, and in the northern parts of the United States. But what is yet more remarkable is the circumstance that, while an Aurora Borealis is visible over the major part of the northern hemisphere, a display of the Aurora Australis is often in progress around the other pole of the earth. Indeed Kaemtz mentions that when Captain Cook's observations are analysed, it appears that every time he observed an Aurora Australis an Aurora Borealis had been seen in Europe, or else the agitation of the magnetic needle proved that around the north pole an auroral display must have been in progress.

Such circumstances as these force us to look upon the aurora as the grandest, because the most widely extended, of all the natural manifestations belonging to the economy of our earth. The fiercest hurricanes limit their fury to a few hundred square miles of territory. The earthquake, devastating as are its powers, yet, even in its most energetic throes, disturbs but a section of some mountain range, and the plains or seas which lie around. But the aurora, while neither terrible like the hurricane, nor devastating like the earthquake, is more imposing than either in the mystery which shrouds its origin, and the inconceivable rapidity with which the hidden influences on which its appearance depends are communicated to the whole earth.

Having thus seen the extent of space over which the aurora may be spread, it may be interesting to inquire a little into the aurora's relation to time.

First of all we may ask with Arago, whether "in all preceding centuries the aurora has appeared with the same forms, the same brightness, the same colours, and so on." The evidence we have on these points is meagre enough, but so far as it goes, it tends to show that the aurora was well known to the ancients. M. Biot states that the first positive notice of an Aurora Borealis "is to be found in Chinese records, and goes back to the year 208 before the Christian era." Pliny refers to strange nocturnal illuminations which could have been nothing else but Aurora Borealis,—"Under the consulate of B. Cæcilius and Cn. Papirius," he writes, "and also at some other times a light was seen to overspread the heavens in the night time, or that a kind

of daylight replaced the darkness." Another passage, which has been quoted by Arago, runs thus,—“Under the consulate of L. Valerius and C. Marius, at the time of sunset, a burning shield, from which sparks shot forth, was seen to traverse the heavens from west to east;” but we should be much more disposed to look upon this account as having reference to the appearance of a large *aérolite* or fire-ball, than as descriptive of an aurora.

While there is every reason for believing that in long past ages the aurora manifested itself precisely as in our own times, there can be no doubt that in different years, and even in different months, the frequency and brilliancy of auroral displays are subject to very striking variations. It is only of late years that the laws of these variations have been discovered.

There is, first of all, what may be called the secular period of auroral displays, respecting which we know little, even if it may not be doubted whether the mere existence of such a period has been satisfactorily established. Kaemtz mentions that between 1707 and 1790 there was a period of this sort, auroras gradually increasing in frequency from the former date, until somewhere about the year 1752, after which they gradually became less frequent, until the year 1790. Professor Olmstead considered that there was sufficient evidence to establish a period of twenty years during which auroral displays are frequent, preceded and followed by intervals of from sixty to sixty-five years, during which but few are witnessed.

But the longest period which has been well established is the now famous ten-year period. Arago was the first, we believe, to give evidence,—though only incidentally,—of the existence of this period. In the years 1828 and 1829 he found that auroras were seen with unusual frequency; and he noticed that during the same years the magnetic needle was perturbed in a very remarkable manner. Since then, the association between magnetic disturbances and the recurrence of auroras has been established beyond all possibility of question. Thus the mere watching of the magnetic needle from day to day and from year to year is as satisfactory a mode of estimating the frequency of auroral displays, as the spreading of observers over the whole of the northern hemisphere, with instructions to watch night after night for the occurrence of auroras, could possibly be. And clearly the former mode is much easier to put in practice. Now the existence of a ten-year period in the motions of the magnetic needle has been placed beyond all doubt by the researches of Colonel Sabine. We speak for convenience of a ten-year period, but in reality the period is somewhat greater. The years 1828—29 corresponded to an epoch of maximum magnetic disturbance. We are now approaching another; but we shall not have reached the culminating point of the magnetic disturbance until 1870. Thus, it will be seen, that the

actual period is about one-fourth of the interval between 1828 and 1870; or, roughly, some ten years and a half.

But now one of the most remarkable of all the problems that nature has ever presented to man for solution has to be mentioned. While Colonel Sabine had been engaged in determining the ten-year period of magnetic disturbances, another observer, equally patient and equally far-sighted, had been observing the gradual processes of change by which the face of the sun becomes now covered with numerous spots, now clear from the slightest stain. Most men would find a few years' attention to this subject sufficiently trying. The eyes grow quickly weary of poring upon the blazing surface of the sun, and of counting every dusky speck which can be detected there. But, fortunately for science, Hofrath Schwabe was not an ordinary observer. We cannot say how long he continued his patient labours for this reason, simply that the last time we heard of him he was still engaged upon them. But this we know, that he began them forty-three years ago, and that during all those years there has scarcely passed a day on which, when weather has permitted, the sun's face has not been scanned with diligent scrutiny. The labour has not been without its reward. It has shown that the solar spots increase and diminish in number in a ten-year cycle. And when that ten-year cycle comes to be compared with Sabine's ten-year magnetic cycle, the two are found to be identical,—the epoch when the greatest number of sun-spots can be seen corresponding always to the epoch of greatest magnetic disturbance,—in other words, to the years in which auroras are seen most frequently and with the greatest splendour.

Thus, just now, when astronomers are engaged in scanning with unusual interest the seamed and spotted face of our great central luminary, meteorologists and physicists are favoured with frequent displays of the northern streamers.

To account for this remarkable relation is not a very easy or simple task. We cannot, for example, pronounce decisively that the two sets of phenomena thus brought into association, stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. It seems indeed scarcely more reasonable to suppose that the sun-spots cause the auroras, than to suppose that the auroras cause the sun-spots. Yet, circumstances have happened to show that the earth sympathises instantaneously with any marked changes or processes taking place upon the sun's surface. In 1859 two observers, Messrs. Carrington and Hodgson happened to be watching the sun's surface at the same instant, at different observatories. Both saw a strange bright light, which broke out at a certain point of the sun's surface, and travelled,—at a rate estimated at about 7,000 miles per minute,—across a portion of the solar disc. At the very same instant the magnetic instruments at Kew were violently disturbed. Magnetic storms swept instan-

taneously,—so subsequent observations proved,—through both hemispheres. At Washington and Philadelphia the signalmen in the telegraphic offices received sharp electric shocks; the tracing pen used in Bain's system of telegraphy was followed by a flame; and in Norway telegraphic machinery was set on fire. Boreal and austral auroras were seen that night with unusual splendour. In fact, a multitude of circumstances combined to prove that the disturbance upon the sun's surface had instantaneously communicated to the earth magnetic thrills, which vibrated through it from pole to pole.

The influence thus found to be exerted by the sun will prepare us to find evidence of an annual period in the recurrence of auroral displays. There is such a period, though its existence is in part disguised by the unequal length of the night in different seasons. For we must remember that although the aurora is only visible at night, its occurrence is in no way associated with the nocturnal hours. An aurora may be in progress during the day time. In fact, it is hoped that before long meteorologist may be able to recognise with certainty the peculiar appearances which indicate in the day time that an aurora is in progress. Failing this, we must at present be content simply to take into account the varying length of the nights, so as not to over-estimate the number of winter auroras, or to under-estimate the number of summer ones. This being done we have, according to Marian, clear evidence that the winter months are not those during which auroras are most common. It would seem that at about the period of the equinoxes their number is most considerable. Auroras of great splendour have been seen at mid-summer, a circumstance which seems the more surprising when it is remembered that there is no true night during our summer months.

We have spoken of the occurrence of auroras by daylight. Doubtless the majority of such phenomena pass wholly unnoticed. But there are not wanting records of appearances which indicate unmistakably the occurrence of diurnal auroras. In the fifth volume of the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, an account is given of an interesting observation made by the Rev. Patrick Graham, at Aberfoyle, in Perthshire.

"On the 10th of February, 1799," he writes, "near half-past three in the afternoon, the sun being then a full hour above the horizon, and showing faintly through a leaden-coloured atmosphere, I was intently observing a halo surrounding the sun. Whilst I was attending to this appearance, the whole visible hemisphere of the heavens became covered with a light palish vapour, as I at first imagined it to be. It was disposed in longitudinal streaks extending from the west, by the point overhead, and all along the sky towards the east. On examining this appearance more narrowly, I found it to

be a true Aurora Borealis, with all the characters which distinguish that meteor by night, except that it was now entirely pale and colourless. The stream of electric matter issued very perceptibly from a cloud in the west; thence diffusing themselves, the rays converged towards the point overhead, and so diverged again towards every quarter of the horizon, and the coruscations were as instantaneous and as distinctly perceptible as they are by night. This appearance continued for more than twenty minutes when it gradually vanished, giving place to thin scattered vapours which, towards sunset, began to overspread the sky. Through the ensuing night I could not detect the smallest trace of aurora."

If any doubt could possibly rest on the accuracy of Mr. Graham's conclusions, it would be removed by the circumstance that occasionally an aurora has been watched during the morning hours, and gradually, as the light of day has extinguished the fluttering rays of the aurora, there have been seen light clouds of the kind called by meteorologists cirro-cumulus, occupying the very spaces where the auroral flashes had been most conspicuous.

Another noteworthy circumstance, indicative of the association which exists between auroras and light clouds, is the fact recorded by Giesler, that travellers in Sweden, when on the higher mountains, will suddenly find themselves enveloped in a transparent fog of a whitish grey colour, becoming faintly tinted by degrees with green. This fog, rising slowly from the ground, is gradually transformed into a true Aurora Borealis.

But there are some observations in connection with auroras, and notably some made during the progress of the recent displays, which are yet more remarkable, and seem, in fact, almost inexplicable. Wrangel asserts that when an aurora is in progress while the moon is shining, as soon as the light from the aurora reaches the moon, the latter becomes immediately surrounded with a well-marked halo. The planets and the brighter stars have similarly seemed to be associated in some mysterious way with the movements of the auroral streamers. Thus, during the remarkable aurora which was observed throughout the United States on the 15th of April in the present year, the planet Mars was attended by a singular glory derived from the aurora. "Mars," says the account, "was almost exactly in the zenith. Around him there seemed a small unilluminated space, enclosed by a ring of pale light. From this ring extended radial bars of light in all directions, like spokes of a huge wheel, to the horizon. As these bars of light neared the horizon they increased in width and brilliancy in some parts of the heavens, giving the most beautiful prismatic colours, of which violet was the most conspicuous." On the same occasion the moon also was adorned in a singular manner. "The moon looked like the nucleus of a huge comet, with

a tail extending westward, and reaching quite below the horizon. The entire sky was covered with a maze of tremulous light."

Without attempting to account for the above relations, it may be pointed out that, taken in conjunction with the association already indicated, as existing between light clouds and auroras, they prove that the tiny prismatic and hexagonal particles which form the feathery clouds of the upper air, are the true seat of the electric discharges to which auroras are doubtless due. We cannot tell how these discharges are caused, or in what way they operate, but we know as surely that the lunar haloes associated by Wrangel with auroras, are due to these particles, as we know that rainbows are due to drops of rain. We are compelled to believe, then, that in some way, as yet not satisfactorily explained, the spread of the auroral action causes these particles to take up those positions which result in the formation of a lunar halo.

Another circumstance suggested by these and similar observations, is the futility of all attempts to estimate the light of an aurora by simultaneous observations made from different places. If the auroral arch were an entity, like the streak of smoke and flame which sometimes remains for several minutes along the track of a meteor, one might estimate the height of the arch as readily as astronomers have already estimated the altitude of meteors. But in reality the auroral arch is as much an optical phenomenon as the rainbow; and we might as well attempt to estimate the height of a rainbow by comparing observations made by different persons as hope to determine the height or distance of an aurora in that manner. Just as each person sees his own rainbow, so every person sees a different aurora. Thus all calculations which have been founded on the assumed effects of difference in the observers' position must be held to be valueless. If any additional fact were necessary to prove this, it is that which, if we remember rightly, Arago adduced with that object,—the circumstance, namely, that observers at stations as far apart as Moscow from Paris, or even as Europe from America, will see the summit of the auroral arch always in the centre of what is called the magnetic meridian for their station,—that is, precisely in the point towards which the dipping needle* is directed. It need hardly be said that this could not happen if the auroral arch seen at one place were the same which is seen at others.

A question which one would suppose it would be very easy to answer has been disputed among meteorologists and physicists with an amusing variety of opinions. It has been asserted that the

* The reader will distinguish, of course, between the dipping needle and the common compass. The dipping needle is a magnetised rod, so suspended as to be free to turn in any direction, and also to assume any inclination whatever to the horizon.

appearance of the northern streamers is commonly accompanied by a rustling noise, resembling the unfurling of banners, or the crackling sound which accompanies the electric discharge. But other observers will have it that the auroral display is invariably silent. Arago draws into array the opposing statements, first presenting us with an accumulation of evidence which renders us absolutely certain that a rustling noise is the natural concomitant of the *Aurora Borealis*, then exhibiting a series of facts which seem to establish with equal certainty a directly opposite conclusion.

The most remarkable evidence in favour of the former view is that given by M. Ramm, Inspector of the Norwegian Forests, who wrote in 1825 to M. Hansteen, that on one occasion he heard the noise of an *Aurora Borealis* in a manner there was no mistaking. He was only about ten years old at the time, and "he remarked the phenomenon when crossing a meadow near which there was a forest. The ground was covered with snow and hoar-frost. The sound which he heard always coincided with the apparition of the bright streamers." According to Gmelin, the botanist, "the hunters who go after foxes in Siberia assert that the auroras make a noise like that of fireworks, such as to make their dogs crouch down with terror and refuse to move until the sound has ceased." But Pallas, who had travelled six years in Siberia, used, according to Patrin, to laugh at Gmelin's narrative; and Patrin remarks that it is not customary to hunt foxes with dogs in Siberia, especially in the night-time. Patrin's own experience is opposed to the view that auroras emit any sound. He lived nine winters in different parts of Siberia, and saw many remarkably brilliant auroras, but he was never able to detect any sound proceeding from them. He adds, that "neither the Bishop Egede, who had lived fifteen years in Greenland, nor the pastor Horrebow, who has described a hundred and sixteen auroras observed by him in Iceland, ever make the slightest mention of these noises and cracklings."

Without distinctly asserting that all those who have supposed they heard rustling sounds during auroral displays have been mistaken, we may agree with Arago, that the mind is easily deceived in such matters. It is so easy, as he remarks, to associate the idea of noise with that of rapid movement, that many unpractised observers may have yielded unconsciously to the illusion. No really skilful observer has ever confirmed the theory that the aurora is other than a silent phenomenon.

It has been asserted that auroras are the regular precursors of certain atmospheric phenomena. But there is not that strict agreement among the various views, which is desirable if real use is to be made of such prognostications. In 1772 Mr. Winn presented to the Royal Society a memoir, in which he sought to prove that the

Aurora Borealis invariably presages a tempest from the south or south-east. But Kaemtz is of opinion that no such law really holds. Too much is now known of the enormous range of country over which auroras are often simultaneously visible to permit us to draw so definite a conclusion. He considers, however, that brilliant auroras, darting long rays, may be looked upon as commonly the precursors of violent gusts of wind, and of extraordinary irregularities in the distribution of heat over the earth's surface.

We do not propose to speculate on the causes of auroras, because as yet the subject has been too little explored to enable a theory to be established on a satisfactory basis. We know that there is an association between the aurora and terrestrial magnetism, and thus we can readily assign electricity as the origin of the appearances presented to us. We can also indicate with every probability the minute icy particles which form the light feathery clouds of the upper regions of air as the true seat of the electric action. But how this action is generated, and in what way it operates, we have at present no satisfactory means of ascertaining.

It has been thought that as other planets besides the earth must be subject to magnetic forces corresponding to those which we include under the general term terrestrial magnetism, it might be possible for the astronomer, under favourable circumstances, to become aware of the existence of auroral displays taking place on those bodies. We could not hope, of course, to witness auroras on Mars or Jupiter, or any of the planets whose paths lie outside the earth's, because these bodies turn always their illuminated hemispheres towards us. But Mercury and Venus, whose paths lie within the earth's, are often seen as mere sickle-shaped threads of light, and there seems nothing to prevent our discerning an auroral display on these planets, whenever one of unusual splendour happened to be in progress, especially as, on account of their nearness to the sun, we may reasonably suppose that all magnetic phenomena are presented upon them with much greater intensity than on our own earth. Also, as these bodies occasionally pass across the disc of the sun, at which time their unilluminated hemisphere is seen by us as a black spot, it seems at first sight that we might fairly hope to see signs of auroral phenomena during the progress of a transit of either planet. Indeed, the faint spots of light which our most eminent observers have detected upon these bodies when crossing the sun's face have been assumed by some to be indicative of auroral displays. But in reality this view must be abandoned, or held, at the least, to be highly improbable. It must not be forgotten that when a planet is crossing the sun's disc, we can only watch the phenomenon by greatly reducing the sun's light. And there can be no doubt whatever that the means we employ to reduce the intense splendour of the sun's light, so that

the eye can look without pain upon his disc, must suffice to blot out altogether any light we could reasonably assign to auroral displays upon either of the interior planets.

Yet we cannot doubt that the other planets, and possibly their satellites also, are from time to time lit up by auroral displays. Nay, associating, as we seem forced to do, the auroras of our own earth with the occurrence of certain as yet unexplained processes of solar action, we seem justified in coming to the conclusion that there are occasions on which all the planets of the solar system are simultaneously illuminated by auroral streamers. Recalling the observation made by Messrs. Carrington and Hodgson, and remembering the sudden magnetic vibration which thrilled through the earth's whole frame as the solar disturbance they witnessed was in progress, we may ask what reason can be alleged for supposing that our tiny world was the only orb which responded to the solar action? On every side, we cannot but suppose, the magnetic influence rushed onwards with the rapidity of light, and doubtless within a few minutes Mercury, Venus, the earth, and Mars, felt the electric impulse; while within a little more than four hours the farthest recognised bounds of our system, where the dimly-lighted Neptune pursues his widely-expanded orbit, were thrilled by the same mysterious vibrations. It is in this aspect, as indicating the existence of new, and till lately, unthought-of bonds by which the members of the solar scheme are associated together, that auroras, or rather the laws of terrestrial magnetism on which their appearance depends, present so fascinating a subject of study to the physicist. We seem brought into a species of communication with the inhabitants of other planets by the thought that the same magnetic vibrations whose action sways the well-watched needles in our observatories are propagated all but instantaneously to those other worlds, and may there, for aught we know, be made the subject of as close a scrutiny as they receive from the terrestrial observer.

THE AGE.

THE age is great ! let whosoe'er
That wills, its majesty attain !
We cannot, who its movement share,
Give judgment passionless and fair.
We look for martyr and for saint
To times behind us—and our eye,
Too near the present, can but spy
At boys who dress and girls who paint !

Thus they of Egypt doubtless did,
In early times—at History's birth.
They saw the sweating crowds that hid
The slowly-rising pyramid—
That now is wonder to the earth !
They thought not of the pile at all ;
This workman's sloth—that bungler's fall
Aroused their satire or their mirth.

The work, that seems so grand to us,
Whom Science and her marvels pall,
Was too familiar to discuss—
They talked of little things ; for thus,
The small for ever please the small.
Aye, when the work was done, the throng
Thought more of feasting, dance, and song,
Than that which towered above them all.

So ages will anon succeed,
More great, perchance, than this of ours,
And—though we did but sow the seed
Of nobler things—will say, " Indeed
It was an age of wondrous pow'rs ! "
It will be well they shall not know
That while the oaks among us grow
We, at their roots, pluck weeds and flow'rs.

Oh, for a man, whose words should strike
 A silence through these petty jars—
 Should prove our babble is but like
 The nightly howl of mongrel tyke
 Who scolds the silence of the stars :
 A noise incessant, meaningless,
 Impugning still the nobleness
 Its clamour magnifies—not mars !

Gaze onward then, and trust the age !
 Uplift clear eyes to heaven's cope ;—
 And be contented to engage,
 As guides throughout your pilgrimage,
 The sweet companions, Faith and Hope.
 Let Folly's pioneers-in-chief—
 Cheap Satire, sneering Unbelief—
 Delight to grovel and to grope !

Look up !—and see how grandly looms
 Above us, what the age has done ;
 And then discuss the drawing-rooms,
 The city marts, the talk of grooms,
 That fade like mists before the sun !
 Discuss such topics, if you can—
 Leave those to mark the March of Man,
 Who follow, when our course is run.

Lo, in our midst a giant stands,
 Who builds his monument complete.
 He strides from distant lands to lands—
 He moulds the nations in his hands !—
 And yet must history repeat
 That you were finding petty flaws
 And quarrels with dead leaves and straws
 Among the dust beneath his feet ?

T. H.

GREEK ROMANCE.

THE earliest form of literature at all resembling the modern novel we owe to the Greeks of Miletus, on the Asiatic coast of the Archipelago. They seem to have derived their first hints of this species of composition from their Persian conquerors; and Aristides, the only known name in connection with the celebrated Milesiaca, who perhaps lived in the age of Pericles, may be considered to all intents and purposes as the founder of Greek romance. None of those Milesian tales, whose name has become proverbial, have reached our times.

When the Hellenic world had, by the conquests of Alexander, become more intimately acquainted with Asiatic life and literature, the European Greeks first turned their genius to compositions of this class. But all that we know about these productions during the next five or six centuries is from that wonderful repository of Greek literature, the "Mysioibiblon" of Photius. Not long probably after the death of Alexander one Antonius Diogenes wrote his "Relations of the Wonderful Things beyond Thule;" a very suitable title, for the adventures it describes outdo even Mandeville. Diogenes seems to owe the substratum of his very sensational romance to that great storehouse of the poets and romancists, the *Odyssey*. The next Greek fiction appeared somewhere about the age of Lucian, and was written by Iamblichus,—not the Platonician. An abstract of the "Babylonica" in Photius is all that we possess. It recorded the misfortunes of true love as exemplified in the fates of two lovers, Rhodanes and Sinon. Their misfortunes arise from the misplaced affection of the King of Babylon for Sinon, who, it may be as well to inform our readers, is the lady, and who remains true to her humble admirer. After an astounding series of escapes and adventures, possible and impossible,—mostly the latter,—Rhodanes by a piece of good fortune acquires at once the hand of his mistress and the throne of Babylon. Spite of inherent improbability, the incidents of the "Babylonica" are sufficiently entertaining, but the constant occurrence of episodic narratives perplex us at last to the utmost degree.

Next in order of time, and by far most important of the Greek school, absolutely and relatively, is the "Æthiopica" of Heliodorus. Relatively it was so inasmuch as it became the groundwork of succeeding novelists. In our judgment, it greatly surpasses in interest,

and is much less monotonous in detail, than the celebrated novels of Madame Scudéry, or the still earlier style of high-flown romance of the sixteenth century. As to the question of the originality of Heliodorus, it is impossible to decide its merits, his predecessors having almost altogether perished. He was Bishop of Tricca in Thessaly; and it is a little curious that the first regular romance which has come down to us is the production of a bishop as well as of a Christian, and that an archbishop should be the one to preserve in epitome the older pagan romancists. In fact, much gratitude is due to the Archbishop of Constantinople for our acquaintance, such as it is, with that original stock. It is perhaps equally curious that the old Christian writers of fiction, with one exception only we believe, have chosen pagan life and the ceremonies of the pagan worship as their subject-matter; and that they describe them not only with minute accuracy, but with seeming sympathy with the splendours and poetic adornment, so to speak, of their ritual. It is indeed reported that Heliodorus was summoned before an ecclesiastical synod, and offered the painful alternative of burning his romance or abdicating his see, and that the bishop,—the author prevailing over the ecclesiastic,—preferred the latter. If so, he showed his good sense. That the good bishop, however, remained in undisturbed possession is probable from the fact that his work was composed before his elevation.

In accordance with Homer's example and Horace's precept his story plunges in *medias res* with a scene on the coast of Egypt, where a body of pirates are introduced on the look-out for plunder. As they cast their eyes around, they observe, at a distance, the relics of an evidently terrific struggle. A ship rides at anchor, laden with merchandise, for it lay deep in the water. On the beach are strewed a number of bodies, newly slaughtered,—some quite dead, others dying. Mingled in confusion with these are the remains of a rich feast, at which they had apparently been surprised. Recovering from their astonishment, the pirates advance towards the scene, and, to their surprise, find the merchandise unpillaged. They at once begin to set about the business themselves. But as they near the ship a spectacle presents itself, perplexing them more than anything they had yet seen. A virgin of extraordinary and almost heavenly beauty is suddenly visible, sitting upon a rock at a short distance off, plainly in the deepest distress, and by her side on the ground lay a youth apparently lifeless. To them, as they advance towards her, her divine beauty and form become still more striking; and, taking her for a goddess,—Artemis, or, perhaps, Isis herself,—the spectators begin to think it prudent to retire from the celestial vision. Their fears subside on observing her next proceedings. She falls upon the inanimate form of the object of all her solicitude, and, embracing, kisses it in uncontrollable transports of passion. Encouraging one another with an assurance that

these were not the actions of a deity, and that a goddess would not lavish such affection on the body of a mortal,—ignorant, it seems, of the well-known behaviour of the goddess of love on a similar occasion,—our pirates once more advance to seize their prey.

Not at all dismayed by this unexpected irruption, his mistress, for so she seemed, continues, without ceasing, to lavish all her care and thought upon the youth. The Egyptians, not understanding her language, and secure of their human prize, set about plundering the treasures lying around. They are not long engaged in this interesting occupation before another robber-band comes upon the scene; and, inferior in strength to the new comers, they prudently beat a retreat. These new comers make a prey of the lady and the youth; and struck equally with the others by the girl's wonderful charms, they rapidly hurry their prisoners off to a fastness in the midst of a marshy lake, beyond a low-lying range of hills. This spot, overgrown with huge weeds and rank vegetation, served them as a convenient place of concealment, where they lived,—some on the low rising patches of land scattered about the surface of the lake, others in boats. To these people, who, with their wives and families, turn out to greet their returning friends, our captive heroine seems as the "breathing image" of some goddess stolen from a temple. In the gaoler to whose keeping they had been consigned, the captives find a fellow-countryman and companion in misfortune. He is a young Greek, of the name of Cnemon, who from this moment becomes their fast friend, and entertains them during the greater part of the ensuing night with his history,—an episode which, being only slightly connected with the main story, we shall take leave to omit.

Next morning, Thyamis, captain of the pirate colony, who from the first had been enamoured of his captive, determines to appropriate her to himself, and harangues his followers for that purpose. By general consent his wishes are acceded to and made known to Chariclea, the heroine. With a ready ingenuity, for which she is always conspicuous, she at once affects compliance, and passes herself off as the sister of Theagenes. His intended bride asserts that she is a priestess of Artemis, at Ephesus, and requests postponement of her nuptials until she can duly resign her priestly office. Her petition is acceded to with a good deal of reluctance. Meanwhile, the real object of her affections, not appreciating his mistress's skilful stratagem, betrays his misgivings, and ventures mildly to reproach her for a too ready submission. Throwing her arms around him, and covering him with a thousand kisses, she at length allays his uneasiness; and it is agreed to keep up the deception even with their new friend for the present. Anxiety on this score, however, is now changed into a fresh alarm, when their friendly gaoler rushes in with news of a new enemy, already close upon them. Thyamis's greatest anxiety is to place his fair captive in safety. He

directs Cnemon to conceal her in a neighbouring cavern, formed with many artificial labyrinths. The young Greek conveys Chariclea to the cave, encouraging her with an assurance that, danger over, Theagenes and himself would return to release her. After a sharp engagement, the pirate colony is cut to pieces. Thyamis, in despair, makes for the cave, to prevent the possession of Chariclea by other hands. He calls aloud, and, guided in the obscurity by a woman's voice in the Greek accent, plunges his sword into her bosom; and, satisfied that his design is accomplished, hurries away to the combat. Thyamis discovers considerable courage and conduct, but falls, after desperate struggles, into the enemy's hands.

After the dispersion of victors and vanquished, the entire morass being in one vast conflagration, Theagenes gives up his mistress for lost, and resolves to follow her fate. Cnemon recalls his hopes by a hurried statement of facts, and they hasten towards the place of concealment. Lighting torches, and groping through various windings, they come upon the lifeless body of a young girl, whom Theagenes frantically bewails as his ill-fated mistress. Presently Chariclea's voice is heard from a farther part of the interior. The mystery is cleared up by Cnemon's recognition of the corpse as that of his perfidious mistress, Thisbe,—whose connection with his fortunes had been related in the episode,—whom he left in Attica. One of the pirate fraternity, into whose power she had come, had chosen the same place of concealment as his superior for Chariclea. It was she who, in the darkness, fell a victim to the jealousy of Thyamis. While the lovers are still embracing, and the other displays little regret for his lost mistress, a new actor comes upon the stage in the person of the last owner of the unfortunate Thisbe. This fellow, seeing the state of matters, might be pardoned for jumping to the not unnatural conclusion that the persons he saw before him were the murderers; but, being unarmed, he dissembles his rage. Upon some pretence Cnemon gets rid of the suspicious pirate, and directs his friends to make for a town called Chemnis, twelve miles distant, on the Nile, promising to rejoin them there when he had safely disposed of their unwelcome companion. Matters were not destined to happen as they wished. Scarcely was Cnemon gone, when a company of Persian troops, hired in the interest of a Greek merchant, who had been deprived of a slave-girl, our acquaintance Thisbe, in fact, came down upon the pair. The merchant, seeing how matters stood, coolly claims Chariclea as the girl of whom he had been robbed. Theagenes, on the other hand, finds himself reserved for the great king at Babylon. So did their unpitiful demons continue to heap misfortunes upon the unhappy lovers.

Meanwhile Cnemon arrives at the rendezvous, and, not finding his friends, is wandering about, when he meets with a man on the banks of the river. Mutually interested in each other's misfortunes,

they quickly form a mutual friendship ; and the young Greek accompanies the other, who, though dressed in Greek costume, turns out to be an Egyptian, to his home. As he pours out a libation to the gods, the Egyptian introduces the names of Theagenes and Chariclea, lamenting them as dead, and excites the ardent curiosity of his guest. He is urged to explain. He complies, and narrates a long history, which, being nothing less in fact than a history of the fortunes of our heroine, and her first meeting with her lover, is of the highest interest. Calasiris,—such was his name,—had long exercised the functions of high priest at Memphis, when a curious circumstance brought about a complete revolution in his affairs. A Thracian lady, of the freezing name of Rhodope, but of gay life and in the bloom of youth, arrives in the course of her travels through the country at Memphis. Accompanied by numerous attendants, and with much pomp, she used to frequent the temple of Isis, whom she propitiated with the costliest offerings. For long the venerable divine resisted the temptation, armed by a proud regard for the sanctity of his office. But the fair temptress proved too much for even a high priest. To prevent inevitable disgrace his only alternative is flight. He leaves behind him two sons, the elder of whom succeeds to the vacant office. Another urgent reason for flight is the deadly strife his prophetic skill shows him to be soon about to arise between the brothers.

He sets out for Delphi, whose fame had of course reached his ears. The goodwill of the god, proved by a speedy response to his inquiries, prepossesses the Delphians in his favour, and he is suffered to live within the precincts of the holy temple. Egyptians, specially priests versed in the antiquities and mysteries of their country, always enjoyed considerable respect from the curious Greeks. They questioned the new arrival as to the Pyramids, the Nile, &c., and he explained to them the phenomenon of the rise of the river in a way not very different from the true one. One of the priests of Apollo confirms his account, which gives occasion to an extremely interesting narrative.

With the view of distracting his mind from the memory of certain heavy domestic calamities, Charicles determines to travel. He penetrates southwards as far as Catadupa, a city in Upper Egypt, to visit the cataracts of the Nile. While in this place he is accosted by an Ethiopian of grave deportment, who, in broken Greek, demands an interview on an important matter. In a mysterious manner the Ethiopian hands over to the other a strange present in the shape of a young girl of surpassing loveliness, and nearly marriageable years. Charicles returns to Delphi with his newly-adopted daughter. She perfectly fulfils, pursued Charicles, the brilliant promise of her earlier years ; and her mind is as rich as her outward person. Yet, notwithstanding the universal adoration of foreigners as well as Greeks, she persistently refuses all the solicitations of her ardent suitors. “ She employs the eloquence I have taught her in magni-

ying the way of life she has chosen. She is inexhaustible in the praise of virginity; places it next the life of the gods,—pure, unmixed, uncorrupt. She is equally skilful in depreciating love, Aphrodite, and marriage." Her time is spent, like that of her patron-goddess, chiefly in the chase. These predilections are all the more vexatious, as the good priest desires to unite her to his nephew. He ends by adjuring his aged companion to exert every influence his experience may suggest to bend, if possible, such an inflexible mind, and even to use those charms and incantations so universally efficacious in subduing hard-hearted maidens.

While they are still conversing, a messenger announces the presence of a Thessalian embassy at the gates of the temple. This embassy was a quadrennial one, sent to sacrifice to the shades of Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, and was always headed by a representative of that heroic line. In the present instance the leader is a youth of such nobleness of form and bearing, he might very well be deemed sprung from some goddess. Everything is prepared for the celebration of the sacred ceremonies: the priestess announces the oracle,—an important one, by the way, as intended to guide the principal actors to the destined goal. It uttered an obscure warning that "those who deserted his temple, and cut the waves with their ship, should travel towards the dark regions of the sun, where they would at last obtain a magnificent award, and white fillets should adorn their brows;" at which, of course, the spectators were, as usual, tolerably perplexed. Each interpreted it differently according to his fancy or inclination, none correctly. Oracles and dreams indeed, justly observes Calasiris, are to be explained by the event. But the approaching splendid spectacle banished all further thought of the ambiguous prophecy.

First came a procession of Thessalian virgins, with dishevelled hair and flowing dress, divided into two companies,—the first bearing baskets full of fruits and flowers, the second vases of spices and sweetmeats, filling the air with their fragrant perfumes. These they bore on their heads; their hands they held joined before them, and advanced with measured steps as in a dance, singing in chorus a hymn in celebration of Peleus and Thetis. So wonderfully did the cadence of the song and the stately dance adapt itself to the melody of the music, that, spite of the splendour of the spectacle, "the sense of sight was overpowered and suspended in a manner by that of hearing." All eyes mechanically followed the forms of the lovely troop. At length a mounted band of youths, to the number of fifty, appeared, dividing itself as they came up into twenty-five on either side of their leader: their buskins were tied with a purple fillet above the ankles; their white garments, bordered with blue, were fastened by a golden clasp over their shoulders.

But now, in Homeric phrase—"When rosy-fingered Eos, child of the dawn, appeared," and the beautiful and accomplished Chari-

clea proceeded from the temple of Artemis, "we then perceived that even Theagenes might be outshone, but only so outshone as feminine beauty is naturally more alluring than that of men. She was carried in a chariot drawn by two white oxen; she was dressed in a purple robe embroidered with gold, which flowed down to her feet. She had a girdle round her waist, on which the artist had exerted all his skill. It represented two serpents, whose tails were interlaced behind her shoulders; their necks were joined beneath her bosom, and their heads, free, came out on each side. So well were they imitated, you would say they actually rolled along. Their eyes swam in a kind of languid lustre, as if fascinated by the charms they beheld. Such was the virgin's girdle. Her hair was neither tied up nor quite dishevelled; but the greatest part flowed down her neck, and wantoned on her shoulders. A crown of laurel confined the lovely locks which adorned her forehead and prevented the wind from disturbing them too roughly. She bore a golden bow in her left hand, in her other a lighted torch; her quiver hung at her right shoulder. Yet a much brighter lustre shone from her eyes than from the flame. "I do not know," continues the narrator, "whether you ever saw them such as all Greece and the sun beheld them on that day,—so conspicuous, so illustrious,—she the secret admiration of all the men, and he of all the women. All thought them equal to the immortals in beauty."

At this critical point in his narrative Calasiris recollects it is full time to perform the libations and other proper rites to the gods who preside over the night. A female servant at his summons brings lighted tapers, and they piously pour out their libations, calling on all the gods, particularly on Hermes, "beseeching them to grant pleasant dreams, and that those whom they loved might appear to them in their sleep." He then, at the urgent impatience of his friend, resumes his story. The emotions of the lovers escaped the observation of the crowd, and, happily, of Charicles; but the vigilant Calasiris saw everything, for from the moment of the utterance of the oracle, and his vision of the two principal actors, he had had no eyes except for them. He had partly divined the meaning, though not the whole, of the oracle, and from that moment all his thoughts were occupied how to bring those together who were thus evidently marked out by the divine will for one another. In his consequent schemes he displays a skill not to be surpassed by the most artful or most accomplished duennas; and he succeeds in hoodwinking the wary, but in this case somewhat credulous guardian of Chariclea. That young lady, smitten irretrievably with the arrows of the god of love, pines away, as her guardian believes, under the effects of some malignant fascination,—a convenient fancy Calasiris takes care to encourage. On repairing to her private apartment, whither she had retired as soon as the ceremony was over, they find the beautiful

victim of Eros in the greatest agitation, thrown across her bed, her eyes soaked through with her all-mastering emotions of love. Oracular dreams occur to both parties, which, as might be expected, mystify rather than enlighten. One night, however, the twin divinities, Apollo and Artemis, present themselves to Calasiris, one leading Theagenes, the other Chariclea, and seem to consign them to his charge, directing his speedy return home with his protégés, and to further conduct them where, and in what manner, it shall please heaven to ordain. What was the fated land he was as yet to learn.

An incident which served to inflame the love of Chariclea was the following. As the Pythian games drew to a conclusion and the judges were about to distribute the prizes, Chariclea, resplendent in her robes of white and gold, with a torch in one hand and a palm branch in the other, as customary, was observed standing at the end of the stadium, where the finishing race of competitors in full armour was to be decided. A warrior of distinguished mien steps forward to the challenge. Theagenes, unable to see so glorious a prize as the crown awaiting the victor in the hands of his mistress given to another, at once accepts the challenge. "When the herald proclaimed the names of the racers,—Ormenus, the Arcadian, and Theagenes, the Thessalian,—when they flew from the goal and ran together with a swiftness that was almost too rapid for the eye to follow, then the virgin was unable to contain herself. Her limbs trembled and her feet moved as if they could assist the course of her lover, on whom her whole soul was intent. When they had not finished more than half their course, Theagenes, turning a little and casting a fierce glance at Ormenus, lifted up his shield aloft, and stretching forward and fixing his eyes intently on Chariclea, flew like an arrow to the goal, leaving the Arcadian a long way behind him. Having reached the virgin, he fell on her bosom, not, I imagine, without design, but apparently as if unable to stop the rapidity of his motion. Taking the palm from her hand, I observed he kissed it."

Calasiris now seriously proposes deferring his narrative to next day, a great part of the night being already passed. But expostulates the other, "I blame Homer for saying that love as well as everything else brings satiety at last; for my part I am never tired of feeling it myself or hearing of it in others." Thus urged, the narrator continued again. The time had now come when, if Chariclea's health and even life was to be preserved, some speedy action must be taken. Her disinterested friend had now discovered the secret of her birth by means of the fillet suspended round her neck. The all-important characters were in Æthiopic, and to this effect:—"Persina, Queen of Æthiopia, inscribes these her lamentations as a last gift to an unfortunate daughter, who has not yet obtained a name. I call the sun, the author of my race, to witness that I do not expose you, my child, and send you from the sight of your father Hydaspes, on account of any crime

of mine." She then records their illustrious lineage, in which were such names as Perseus, Andromeda, and Memnon. "Our bedchamber was painted with the history of Andromeda and Perseus. There in the tenth year of our marriage, when as yet we had no child, I retired to repose myself during the scorching heat of noon, and here your father, Hydaspes, visited me, being warned to it in a dream. I became with child; the whole time of my pregnancy was a continued feast; a series of sacrifices and thanksgivings to the gods for the near prospect of an heir to the kingdom. But when I brought you forth, a white infant, so different from the Ethiopian colour, however grieved at the unfortunate accident, I was not at a loss to explain the cause of it. I had had my eyes too often and too constantly fixed on the picture of Andromeda, whom the painter had represented just unchained from the rock, naked, and of the most beautiful complexion, and my imagination had communicated her colour to my unhappy offspring." "But this reasoning," Queen Persina very justly fears, "though satisfactory to me, might not have been so to any one else."

In short, she divulges how she exposes her child, and concludes with a pathetic appeal to her, in case of surviving, above all things to remember the noble race from which she was sprung, to cultivate virtue and modesty. Among the jewels she is enjoined to guard with special care, is a certain ring, the circle of which was inscribed with royal characters, and the stone of which possessed a powerful occult virtue.

We must pass over the various stratagems by which Calasiris brings about the flight of the lovers. Sufficient to say that by a well-planned plot Charicles and the principal Delphians are put off the scent in a wild-goose chase, while the fugitive lovers with their benevolent chaperon embark on board a vessel awaiting them in harbour. They make for the island Zacynthus to await the spring, before continuing their voyage to Tyre. Here the narrator finds it high time to retire to repose. Just now a noise is heard at the door. It is caused by the return of the hospitable owner of the house,—in fact, by our old friend the Greek merchant, who had accompanied the Persian troops in search of his lost treasure, and who now returns, not with his original possession, but, as our readers will recollect, with our heroine. Ignorant of the facts, the two most nearly interested in the matter do not find out the truth till next morning. Nausicles, the merchant, not wholly to his satisfaction, consents to surrender his acquisition to her guardian. A grand sacrifice and feast,—feasts being almost as indispensable concomitants then as now,—celebrate the happy event, though the reunion is far from complete by the absence of the hero. While the rest of the company sing the praises of Dionysus, the women singing hymns to Demeter, Chariclea retires from the gay scene to lament apart. Meanwhile, at the request of Nausicles and Cnemon, the fortunes of the fugitives are continued.

At Zacynthus they had found a humble but safe lodging in the hut of a fisherman of the island, and but for the troublesome importunities of one of their fellow-passengers, a Tyrian merchant, who aspired to the hand of Chariclea,—for safety she passed as the sister of Theagenes,—they would have passed the winter very agreeably. We ought to have stated that the prudence of his mistress had extracted a solemn oath from her adorer to be content to await the end of their wanderings, as pointed out by the oracle, for the consummation of his happiness; and this self-denial he would have self-imposed, as he protests, without the formality of an oath. In fact, he most rigidly and almost miraculously keeps his promise.

During the voyage to Tyre they fall in with and are captured by pirates. The captain designs Chariclea for himself. By a clever stratagem Calasiris sets them quarrelling amongst themselves, and in fine they all fall by their own hands in the midst of their festivities. This is the scene which opened the story. Calasiris escaped capture by being at a distance when the new pirates arrived, and thus his narrative ends. All showed deep concern at the misfortunes of himself and his wards, and shed many tears,—for, says Heliodorus, tears readily flow when the head is full of wine. Nausicles bids them take courage, promising to assist in the search for Theagenes on the morrow. Long after the dispersion of the guests, Chariclea is found in solitude at the feet of the image of Isis, in deep sleep, wearied by long prayers, and exhausted by grief. Her venerable protector conducts her, blushing at her imprudence, to her chamber, where she passes anything but a tranquil night.

Next day, taking leaving of Cnemon and commending the merchant to Hermes, the patron of gain, and Poseidon, the preserver, she and her guardian disguise themselves, for safety, in beggars' costume and launch out into the world. We must pass over their adventures until they arrive at a lucky moment before the walls of Memphis. This city was being besieged by Theagenes and Thyamis, now firm allies; the object of the latter being to recover his patrimony and priesthood from his usurping younger brother. The brothers, it had been agreed, should decide their claims by single combat. The satrap himself was absent in a war with the Ethiopians. His favourite wife, Arsace, who commands in his absence, has stationed herself on the ramparts with a brilliant staff to witness the duel; and being of a highly amorous disposition, no sooner sees the fine figure of Thyamis than she falls in love with that warrior, an affection, however, which quickly devolves upon the superior attractions of our hero. Thyamis soon asserts his superiority over his unworthy brother, but has no intention of killing him. Their father now opportunely intervenes, and throwing off his disguise makes himself known, and the scene closes with a general *éclaircissement*. Calasiris enjoys the satisfaction of publicly placing the sacer-

dotal diadem on the head of his elder son. A more interesting event is the reunion once again of the hapless lovers. Chariclea at first view rushes to the arms of Theagenes, covering him with caresses; but the eye of the other,—the male sense, we presume, being not so acute,—was not true in this instance to the instinct. Failing to penetrate her disguise, he repulses her approaches with indignation. The blindness was merely momentary, and they are soon happy in each other's arms.

When their sorrows seemed coming to an end other troubles speedily disturbed their elysium; and a heavier trial than any yet experienced was sent by their adverse demon. Arsace, madly in love with the Thessalian prince at first sight, as soon as she saw the rapturous interview, was seized with a devouring jealousy of her more fortunate rival. She gazes with mingled admiration and despair. An uncontrollable transport of passion during the night drives her almost out of her senses. Her old female confidant, skilled in her mistress's moods, undertakes the case. By her agency the unsuspecting lovers are decoyed into the palace. Every luxury falls to their lot, and the old woman artfully prepares the reluctant object of Arsace's regards for the favours for which he is destined. "She has a particular pleasure," assures the duenna, "in comforting the unfortunate. Though by birth a Persian, in disposition and tastes she is Greek. She is passionately fond of the Greek language and manners. You will not fail to receive everything a man can wish for; and your sister will be her companion and favourite." No promises, cajolings, threats, not even the prudent suggestions of the goddess of his heart, who thought a little complaisance under the circumstances might be perhaps excusable, availed to bend the new Adonis, spite too of the undeniable youth and personal attractions of his would-be seducer. Violent love unrequited turns at length into equally violent hate. Theagenes is thrown into a dungeon like his Jewish prototype; while Chariclea narrowly escapes poisoning, and is herself accused of the crime. She is brought before the judges and sentenced to be burned alive. She is led out to the pyre followed by an immense crowd. Her apparent innocence and beauty already prepossess the spectators in her favour. And now a strange miracle occurs. The flames instead of consuming their prey play harmlessly round, serving only to give additional splendour to her charms; and she lies unharmed, as it were on a fiery couch. Arsace, furious, bids fresh fuel to be supplied to no purpose; till the people, considering the matter to be of divine interposition, begin to call audibly for her release. She is removed and reserved for a fresh trial. Visions and dreams portend to each of the suffering pair some approaching changes of fortune. Calasiris, who was now dead, worn out by his exertions, appears to Chariclea. Simultaneously Theagenes is favoured with a prophetic warning,—
 "With the virgin you shall arrive at the Ethiopian land, fleeing to

morrow from Arsace's chains,"—an oracle he interprets in a gloomy sense as portending approaching death. Chariclea, on the other hand, discovers nothing but promise in these warnings. How their deliverance will be effected is not very apparent; but all things are possible to the gods. And she now recollects, in speaking of her late miraculous escape, the efficiency of the ring above mentioned, the stone of which, called Pantarbe, as she conjectures, has the power of preserving from fire.

In the middle of the night they are suddenly carried off from the palace dungeons, as they suppose, to immediate death. Fortunately they are mistaken. Oroondates, the satrap, informed of the proceedings at Memphis, had despatched a troop in all haste secretly to bring away the captives to him. Our space does not allow us to describe at length the succeeding events which, during the whole of the ninth book, relate to the war between Oroondates and Hydaspes. It must be enough to state that the Ethiopian king gains a complete victory over the Persians. Our hero and heroine had already fallen into the hands of their unconscious friends and future subjects; and they attend in the train of the conqueror to the capital, Meroe. Here the first pressing business is to celebrate a grand human sacrifice consisting of the purest virgins and the noblest youths. What need to recount that Chariclea and Theagenes figure most conspicuously among those, or that Persina experiences a secret and unaccountable sympathy with one of the lovely victims? Agitated by unknown feelings, she tries all she can to induce her orthodox husband to depart for once from the customs of his religion and empire, and save a captive of such surpassing interest. Only one chance, replies the monarch, can save her;—it is that on ascending the sacrificial altar she should prove a not inviolate virgin; for the golden bars of the pyre are of such eminent virtue they refuse all but the chastest offerings. But, he assures his pleading wife, in neither case can you be benefited. For should the gods thus publicly prove the unfitness of the sacrifice, it would be in the highest degree indecorous to receive her into the royal household. Persina declares that in this case some excuse might be found, considering a wandering life, absence from friends, captivity and war, which afford so many risks, particularly to one of transcendant charms,—and her tears flow in torrents. Hydaspes orders the pile to be prepared. The greater part of the captives,—we know not whether we ought to rejoice or to lament,—fail in the trial. However, it only temporarily availed them, as they are devoted to the deity of Bacchus, who is well known to be less squeamish than the spotless Artemis and Apollo, the deities of the sun and moon, and the Ethiopian chief celestials. Two or three Greek maidens go through the fiery ordeal without reproach.

Theagenes now ascends, and being equally fortunate, finds himself destined as an offering to the sun. As he retires he softly whispers

to his mistress,—“Is death then, and sacrifice, the reward which the Ethiopians bestow upon purity and innocence? But how long, my dearest life, will you delay the discovery of yourself?” Their fate, she replies, “is even now trembling in the balance,” so saying she draws from her bosom her sacred white Delphic robes interwoven with gold and purple. She lets her hair fall dishevelled, and with the impetuous air of inspiration moves quickly to the pyre. Her immaculateness, of course, at once appears. The wonder and admiration of the vast concourse rise to the highest pitch. But Hydaspes presses on the ministering priests to proceed quickly with their work. And now the venerable Sisimithres, who is the veritable Ethiopian who had consigned his precious charge to the Greek Charicles, and one of the Gymnosophic sect, finds it a proper time to enter his protest. He refuses to take part in such detestable sacrifices, and is withdrawing from the scene, when Chariclea, descending with precipitation from the altar, displays the various credentials of her birth. Even yet no relenting is visible on the part of king and people; nor do they seem inclined to be convinced against the evidence of their senses and the dazzling fairness of her complexion. Sisimithres, who has been hitherto purposely keeping back, again interposes, and in fine, Chariclea is pronounced to be indisputably the child of Hydaspes and Persina, and the heiress of the empire. Theagenes still remains in danger. Not all the frantic entreaties of Chariclea, who threatens to perish at the same moment with her lover, nor all the feats of courage and strength performed by himself, would have saved him, but for the sudden apparition on the stage of Charicles. Once more Sisimithres intervenes and clears up the mysteries. The Delphic oracle is fulfilled, and joyful acclamations approve the approaching nuptial of two faithful lovers, of unexampled constancy, and the heirs to the Ethiopic throne.

Such is an outline of this famous romance. Its chief merits lie in beauty of language and style, and in many parts of description, not indeed of natural scenery, or even in any very important respect of general manners, which latter would have added greatly to its interest for us, but of the grand solemn processions and services of the temples. If the author dwells a little too much on the pomp of sacrifices and religious festivals, it may be excused perhaps to the priest and the character of the age. Photius praises his diction for its sweetness and freedom from affectation. His style is highly poetic, and he is evidently imbued with the Homeric beauties. Tasso praises the skill with which he gradually evolves the intricacy of his story, and keeps the reader in suspense of alternate hope and fear,—“il lasciar l'auditor sospeso.” Huet, in his “*L'Origine des Romains*,” especially commends the final scene at Meroe, though it has seemed to others a little overdone. As to its differences from the modern novel, it is scarcely necessary to point them

out. They are seen in the absence of delineation of character; in the episodic and somewhat intricate form of the plot; and in the slender prominence given to the hero, who acts a very subordinate part, and disappoints our expectations raised at Delphi. Chariclea, it will be obvious, takes a much more active, as well as prominent, part in the adventures. That the lady should constitute the most interesting character is proper; but that she should act most prominently in every situation is scarcely in keeping with the romantic sentiment. In all the Greek romances, however, not only is the heroine most energetic, but she even takes the lead in making love,—and that too on by no means most refined or romantic principles. Specially is this the case with the Leucippe of Tatius and the Ismene of Eustathius, while the hero seems strangely insensible to all the allurements of the fair charmer. The Chariclea of Heliodorus, it is just to add, is always an exception to this rule. We have already alluded to the Cleitophon and Leucippe of Tatius or Statius, who is considerably indebted for incident to the "*Æthiopica*," as also to the beautiful story of Hero and Leander of Musæus. We can do no more here than merely say that with all the conspicuous elegance and ease of style which have been much commended by Photius and Huet, it is much inferior to its predecessors in the interest, probability, and decency of the scenes. A more important production, variously referred from the fifth to the tenth century, is the celebrated pastoral of Longus, telling of the loves of Daphnis and Chloe. Abounding in the most charming descriptions, Longus may justly be called the Theocritus of prose pastoral. He has had numerous admirers and imitators, from Tasso in his "*Pastor Fido*," Spenser in his "*Faithful Shepherd*," Sidney in his "*Arcadia*" to D'Urfé and Montemayor, among all of whom he is, we think, facile princeps. Huet, indeed, has blamed him for a transgression of the laws of romance in beginning with the birth of his shepherds, and carrying his narrative beyond their marriage, for "*il faut finir au jour des noces et se taire sur les suites de mariage*. Une heroine de Roman grosse et accouchée est une étrange personnage." In a different style again is the half-religious romance of Barlaam and Josaphat, the production of a monk in the eighth century, Johannes of Damascus, which was evidently intended for the edification of the faithful, and written specially to recommend the merits of monastic life. It abounds in magic and evil demons, who are of course always plotting against the Church and the monks.

OLIVIA'S FAVOUR.

A TALE OF HALLOWE'E'N.

PART I.

THE Ormathwaites had been Tories and Royalists for generations. They struggled on the Royal side, in all civil commotions, whatever the conditions of the contest might be, they being for the most part plain country gentlemen, too much engaged in the management of their property, in fox-hunting, and defending their northern home from the depredations of moss-troopers, to trouble themselves much about public affairs or the particularities of politics. Ormathwaite, of Ormathwaite, espoused the Royal cause for better for worse ; he asked no questions as to what made King and Parliament fall out. Parliament might be right, Parliament might be wrong ; the King was the King. So he gathered his followers about him, mounted his horse, and laid his service at his Majesty's feet ; and after risking his life and fortune in the service of the Stuart kings, was ready to bear contentedly the neglect and ingratitude with which those easy monarchs usually rewarded their adherents when the sunshine of prosperity was bright upon them.

But even in the most Conservative families new ideas sometimes arise and changes come, and in 1715, when the Jacobite cause was beginning to show head, and the smouldering fires of rebellion were just ready to burst into flame, Mr. Calvert Ormathwaite sat in the House of Commons among the Conservative Whigs, and voted consistently on the side of the Government. And well for him that it was so. In the autumn of that year, when rumours came of the sudden appearance of the Pretender in Scotland, and the Jacobite gentlemen of the northern counties, headed by Mr. Foster and the gallant Earl of Derwentwater, took up arms in the Stuart cause, Mr. Ormathwaite was away in London. "During these disturbed times," that worthy gentleman said, "when the Government totters to its overthrow, when the throne is menaced by threats abroad and conspiracies at home, it behoves every man who calls himself a Protestant or a patriot to bare his bosom in defence of the Protestant succession."

Many a brave gentleman, as we know, who rode out to meet the Chevalier, paid for his enterprise with his life, and many a home in Cumberland was made desolate by the vengeance of the Government. But Ormathwaite flourished in security and peace. Calvert Ormathwaite had married a lady of Whig family, an heiress, and some years older than himself. She died soon after their marriage, leaving

only one child, a daughter, who was thenceforward consigned to the care of her grandmother, old Mrs. Ormathwaite, or "the mistress," as she was usually called through the country-side. From this good lady and the vicar, to whom a portion of her education was confided, Olivia Ormathwaite learned all that a gentlewoman of that time was expected to know, besides a thousand endearing, womanly charms, an integrity and reverent piety of heart, which in the year of grace 1715 were more likely to be found in a country-bred woman than among the young beauties who had tasted the seductive charms of the Court and town. The mother of Calvert Ormathwaite was very far from sharing in the Whig principles of her son. She was as staunch a Jacobite as any man of her house. Many a tear did she shed over the defection of her son from the true cause of legitimacy and right, as she prayed for the King's sacred majesty (thus she fondly termed the vagabond prince), then in shameful and cruel exile; and when the troubles of '15 came, many a poor flying wretch did she shelter and help to escape from the horrors of Lancaster and Preston jail.

The lives of the two ladies in the old hall was monotonous, but not wearisome. They visited and tended their poor neighbours, often walking for miles across the breezy moors to some distant cottage. They sat at their needlework together in the sunny wainscoted room, the mistress's parlour, which looked down over the wild valley of Wastdale, while Miss Ormathwaite read aloud the Psalms for the day or a chapter from some edifying book. In the evening came, perhaps, Dr. Pettigrew the vicar, or Mr. Stade the curate, to play a game at backgammon and discuss the affairs of the valley, or the latest news from London. Occasionally, too, there were visits to be paid among the neighbouring gentry. The Scropes of Bassenthwaite, who were relations of the Ormathwaites, and the Ormathwaites of Kendal, and the Ashburnhams. Then there were the somewhat more formal visits to Ascham Place, the seat of Lord Ascham, who, as every one knows, took an active, though secret part, in the rising of '15, but with happy dexterity evaded the consequences, saving his neck at the price of his honour, and falling afterwards into the foremost ranks of the Hanoverian party. The heavy bottle-green carriage was brought out on the occasion of these visits, and pursued its way, lumbering down the steep and rough mountain roads, almost hiding in its depths the two ladies, who, when the worst lurches came, thanked heaven that these expeditions had not to be made often, and that the usual journeys up and down the valley and to church could be made on foot or horseback.

Two of the most remarkable events in the life of Olivia Ormathwaite were the visits of her great-aunt, Madame la Baronne de la Condillac, who, with her son, a boy of fifteen, came to visit Ormathwaite when Olivia was still a child, and again in the year 1718, when Olivia had just reached her eighteenth year. Olivia remembered the first visit of

her French cousin, their games and rambles together. One memorable day there was on which he and his friend, Harry Ashburnham, the son of a neighbouring squire, had taken her high up on the moors to see the partridge nests; and when, sitting perched on a rocky throne among the heather, she had watched the two boys as they held a mock fight below. Memorable too was the return in the evening, as they forded the stream, she seated on the shoulders of the boys, like Flora borne by Zephyrs. She remembered the mixed delight and terror in which she sat of an evening hearing Robert recount his adventures of the day to his mother; how he and Harry had climbed the church tower for birds' eggs, and swam the lake, carrying their caps full of eggs in their mouths.

The second visit of the young Frenchman, when Olivia was grown to womanhood, was not wanting in events of momentous interest, though the egg-hunting enterprises were over. His old companion, Henry Ashburnham, was then at Oxford, but Robert scarcely seemed to miss his presence. He was quite content to loiter away his time in the wainscoted room now, or, as Olivia sat at her work in the high garden, to lie at the feet of his beautiful kinswoman, where, it is easy to suppose, the impetuous Frenchman had already laid his heart. Olivia shared in the political opinions of her cousin, and possibly her enthusiasm in the Jacobite cause had done something to seal his devotion to it. Olivia's ardour, on the contrary, unlike that usually attributed to women's political views, was much less guided by personal motives, nay, indeed, seemed to spring from what some people are fond of calling political "conviction." While she was singing her Jacobite songs with Robert, and making him white knots of ribbon to pin to his lace ruffle, her heart was innocent of any emotion but that of a sisterly sympathy with one who was united with her in the "Great Cause;" while the brave captain was fondly taking the colour of his thoughts from her smiles, she was inspired alone by a lofty impersonal enthusiasm very imposing to behold.

Indeed, when one is obliged to review her subsequent history, one must regret that such exceptional zeal, such purity of unmixed political feeling as distinguished this sweet lady, should have been doomed to a lapse of such entire inconsistency as her conduct afterwards shows. But of this the reader will hear later.

The education of Robert Gresham de la Condillac had scarcely risen to the moderate standard required by a gentleman of that period, but he had a grace and gallantry of bearing, a brave and honourable heart, that made many overlook his very slender scholastic attainments. Among the family annals, from which the particulars of this little history are mainly drawn, only one letter of this young gentleman's writing is to be found. The document may have been preserved more as a curiosity in the way of spelling than anything else. Unimaginable ways of rendering both French and English words,—for

he wrote in both languages with equal obscurity,—are herein found. It was doubtless his mother to whom he owed much of the spirit and grace which distinguished him. She was a woman of imperious temper, a warm heart, and most vivacious spirit. She had been a beauty in her youth, and had married the scapegrace, Baron de la Condillac, against the wishes of her friends who, naturally, regarded with disfavour the suit of a man who, beside being a scapegrace, was a widower, with a son to inherit his titles and estate.

Mrs. Ormathwaite had been the good angel to her beautiful sister all her life. She was, perhaps, the only person who had ever lived a whole week with Madame la Baronne without quarrelling with her, and to the last day of her life Madame de la Condillac deferred to her sister's judgment, and was more restrained by a look or a word of disapproval from her than by the united opposition and adjurations of the rest of mankind. "My sister, Ann," Madame de la Condillac used to say, "has led the stupidest humdrum life, shut up among the mountains, and knows nothing of the world, but she has the manners of a princess and the mind of an angel!"

The married life of Madame de la Condillac had not been, as may be supposed, a happy one. The Baron had embittered her days by his gambings, and other villanies; and when, at his death, his estate passed to his son by a former marriage, Madame de la Condillac shook off from her feet the dust of the gloomy old Château de Condillac, and removed to Paris with her son, then a boy of twelve years old. Here she gathered about her a choice company of English, French, Irish, and Italians, who professed allegiance to the cause of King James; and her little drawing-room in the Rue Saint Jean was one of the principal rendezvous of the Jacobites in Paris. Hither came Mr. St. John, hiding under a cynical gaiety "the smart of the bill of attainder that tingled in his veins." Here were collected, the nameless and the noteworthy, men of the loftiest honour and scamps of all nations, who professed devotion to the House of Stuart. They sipped coffee, and whispered state secrets behind ladies' fans; they flirted, and plotted, and quarrelled, and betrayed the secrets on one Tuesday night that they had sworn to keep the Tuesday before.

At nineteen young Robert received a commission in the French army, fought with distinction under General Marsen, and soon obtained his captaincy. He threw himself with enthusiasm into the Jacobite cause, and received heaven knows what sort of promissory commission in the prospective army of the Chevalier then living at St. Germain. Prudence was not numbered among the qualities of Captain Robert; and if ever there was an enterprise on foot in which the odds were the risk of your neck, and nothing to win, he was sure to take part in it. He was not very clever, and certainly had a fatal disposition to do the worst for himself generally; but there are times

when Captain Robert assumes the place of an hero in the eyes of his descendant, who here narrates his modest history. As he pulls up his trooper's boots, claps his cap on his head, and springs to the saddle to ride from London to Dover, carrying despatches which would hang him a hundred times if found upon him; when I see him putting his hand into a thousand foolish quarrels, but always to bring his broad chest and gallant arm between the weak and the strong; poor Captain Robert, with his one ill-spelt letter, his blundering generosity, his fierce, tender heart, seems more deserving of praise than many a wiser man.

In the year 1718 Robert Gresham paid, as we have seen, a visit to Ormathwaite, and passed those sunny autumn days pleasantly enough, strolling over the moors with his gun, or narrating his adventures to the two ladies, as they sat over their work, or sitting by Olivia at her spinet,—for he had a fine voice, of the kind called baritone, I believe,—singing his French songs of war and love, and the Jacobite ditties of which I have spoken.

Whether during the two following years he again visited Ormathwaite, is not recorded. It is probable that at this time he was again engaged in the Jacobite plots which were then brewing in England, and if such a visit were made it was doubtless a secret one.

It was fortunate for Captain Robert that, just before the ill-starred raising of the Chevalier's standard in 1715, he was wounded in a duel in which he had foolishly entangled himself, and was laid up in lodgings in London. It was at this time that Henry Ashburnham fell in with Gresham, and renewed the acquaintance formed as boys during the first visit of Madame de la Condillac and her son to Ormathwaite. Chance threw them together in a London Coffee-house, on the occasion of that same quarrel which resulted in the duel in which Gresham was wounded. Mr. Ashburnham recognised his old friend, and behaved with great spirit and kindness in the affair. Gresham was poor, alone, and almost friendless in London. Ashburnham, though a staunch Whig himself, was fascinated afresh by the odd French-Englishman, and served him as a true friend. Indeed, he seemed never weary of sitting at the bedside of the sick man, whose gay temper was French, and not English, and hearing him recount his adventures, as he lay puffing his pipe, and shouting and gesticulating with what he termed his "sane" arm. Ashburnham, who, though younger than Gresham, was of a somewhat sedate and dignified bearing, gave much advice to his gay companion, which, however, was little heeded.

"Waste not thy breath upon me, it is pearls to the swine, mon ami," Captain Robert exclaimed once, after Ashburnham had been indulging in some of his usual wise observations on the political questions of the day. "You are a man of discretion; you have

principles to your politics : I have none. Your head is sound, cool ; you examine, you weigh,—I never. You would renounce your mistress to-morrow were she a Jacobite ! ”

Ashburnham stuffed some tobacco into his pipe-bowl, and smiled, perhaps a little uneasily.

“ And you ? ” said he, “ if you had the misfortune to give your heart to a lady of my opinions, what would you do ? ”

“ Ma foi ! there would rest to me nothing but to conjure her to renounce them ; and if in vain,—well,—to shoot myself in the head, voilà tout ! ”

“ A happy solution,” said Ashburnham. “ You would probably be long in argument before proceeding to such extremes, however.”

Gresham shook his head. “ It would be in vain. I have not the patience to convert. I run always before my head. I know not whether it be angel or devil that leads, but I go. As my blood flows, so I go. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*. I know that much Latin at least. *Vive le roi !* ”

“ Hush ! be quiet, Gresham, or you will bring the people of the house here to see what is the matter.”

“ Maudits ! What care I for them ! Listen, my friend,” he cried with sudden vehemence, raising himself with a start from the pillow. “ Did I not hear them laughing and dancing below the very day those poor wretches were carried to Tyburn on the tumbrils, while I lay cursing and groaning here.”

“ I know, I know,” said Ashburnham, “ it was all very bad ; but lie down, Gresham, and be reasonable, it is no use raking up the past.”

Gresham sank back on his pillows, and puffed away in silence.

“ I wish,” said Ashburnham, after a pause, during which he had taken a turn through the room, “ I wish, Gresham, you were married, in good earnest, and had a wife to keep you safe at home, and mend your clothes, and make you respectable. You would soon give up all this. Did you ever think of this ? ”

Captain Robert lay still, and gazed upward to the ceiling. He shook his head, the colour rose to his sallow face. “ I have had my fool’s dream, like any other man who has reached my age, I suppose,” said he.

Ashburnham shrugged his shoulders. “ You have thrown away your heart on some Frenchwoman,” said he, with the insular scorn of his nation.

“ Thrown away ! ” cried the impetuous Captain, “ you say thrown away ? She is of my own blood—the best, the dearest, the sweetest ! Good saints ! I could have kissed her slipper, and blessed her for a look ! ”

“ She threw your heart away, then, which is the same thing ? ” replied his friend.

“ No,” said Gresham, shaking his head, “ I never told her how I

adored her—but I once wrote her a letter to say ‘Good-bye,’ when I went away, and——”

“Well,” said Ashburnham, “did you get no answer?”

“She sent me a spelling-book,” said Captain Robert, with a groan, turning his face to the pillow. “I had spelt those cursed words wrong. She knew not that I was dying for a word of hope, of consolation, and she meant no harm. She put a white rose inside the book, and told me to wear the one and use the other. It was the only keepsake she ever gave me.”

Ashburnham was again silent. He was meditating on the story which the few words of his friend revealed; pondering on the fidelity with which that badge of love and the Stuart cause had been worn by the brave captain. He was thinking of the tenderness and loyalty of this simple heart. And yet the woman had not cared for him, it seemed. Women never discern anything in a man below the surface, mused the youthful sage. She must have been of his own way of thinking, or she would not have given him the white rose; and yet this might have been read as a sign of favour more than a political badge, and Robert, perhaps, was only too modest to interpret it aright. Poor Gresham! it was one of his mistakes; but a mistake that might be retrieved. Who was the lady? Ashburnham wondered,—a Jacobite of his blood, he had said. Ashburnham suddenly sprang to his feet, and walked rapidly to and fro through the room; some startling idea had evidently interrupted his cogitations at this point. Gresham’s pale face had resumed its wonted expression as he lay watching the fine spiral line of smoke that rose above his head, and he was somewhat startled when, after a silence of some minutes Ashburnham suddenly came to stand by the bedside;—“You and I, Gresham, have been brought together by strange chances,” said he,—“God grant we may never cross each other’s paths!”

He paced once or twice through the room, and then paused once more, looking down on Gresham with a somewhat solemn visage. He appeared to be on the point of saying something of a serious nature, but the Captain, evidently fearing that he was about to receive some further good advice, exclaimed with a burst of laughter, “Bravo, mon ami! I see thou art about to make me a speech on my follies. Ah, thou shalt yet be in Parliament, and thy Whigs shall rejoice over thee; but I, I comprehend not speeches. Allons, done! Bring hither the cards, and deal. Thou art the truest of friends, the best of Whigs, and I, the most contented of poor devils! Vive le——ah, I will not forget the villaine Hanoverienne en bas. Vive le jeu! Vive l’amitié!”

No one, after hearing the foregoing conversation, will be surprised to learn that neither good advice nor experience of past failure was enough to deter Captain Robert from getting again entangled in Jacobite plots, and that when he rose from his sick-bed it was only

to join in one more desperate attempt to overthrow the Government. His freedom from complicity in the rising of the year before gave him immunity from suspicion, and he was once more employed in a secret commission in the Jacobite interest.

The Gyllenberg plot, which had for its object nothing less than the interference of Sweden in behalf of the Pretender, was in the autumn of 1716 ripening slowly day by day. Charles XII. had entered warmly into the scheme, and the Jacobites triumphed in having released their cause from the odium of a Catholic and French alliance, and in having enlisted in their favour the support of a Protestant power, and the sympathy of the most brilliant and warlike prince of his time.

The Jacobite schemers were alert and busy; the very day was fixed for the descent of a Swedish squadron on the coast of Scotland, when suddenly, in the beginning of October, the bubble burst, the secret correspondence between Gyllenberg and Gortz was discovered, and the whole plot laid bare.

Among those most seriously implicated was Captain Robert Gresham. One pleasant October evening, but two days after the Government had made that fortunate seizure of papers, but before the fact of the discovery had been made known, Captain Robert was trotting briskly over the downs between London and Dover. He had cleared a low hedge and was riding gaily along, when he perceived that two horsemen were close behind him. Robert wheeled round quickly and faced them with a momentary thought of highwaymen. Captain Gresham was considerably out at elbows at the time, and had little of value about him unless you reckon a pair of long silver-mounted spanish pistols and a pocket-book containing certain letters tightly buttoned under his threadbare coat. The gentlemen were not highwaymen however, but officers of his Majesty's twenty-third regiment of cavalry, then stationed at Deal. One of them rode alongside of Robert and bade him stand in the King's name. This was a crisis to bring out the discretion that lay dormant in Captain Robert's nature, indeed, was only to be struck out in times of danger,—in flashes, as it were, at a white heat. He had one moment to decide whether to yield his sword, hand over his precious packet, and return with those gentlemen and take his chance in an examination in London, or—
“There's for your King!” shouted Captain Robert, and the piece of the foremost officer was struck high in the air, descending like a spent rocket at the other side of the hedge, and the contents of the Captain's pistol was lodged in the head of his assailant's horse, which fell, rolling his rider on the sand. A fortunate star shone for the Captain at the moment, the pistol of his other antagonist missed fire, and that gentleman received a well-aimed blow from the butt end of Gresham's good Spanish piece that felled him to the ground, stunned and powerless. After this the Captain let no grass grow under his

feet you may be sure. For reasons best known to himself he turned his horse's head northward, and that was the last heard of Captain Robert for some time.

And now, kind and patient reader, we will, with your leave, transfer ourselves to Ormathwaite, and visit it towards evening of the last day of October, 1716, some three weeks after we took leave of Captain Robert on the downs. The rain had fallen during the morning; but now, towards sunset, the clouds were lifting and rolling over the great head of Scawfell Pike, and rifts of yellow light gleamed to the westward. A soft and gusty autumn wind swept over the moors, purple with heather, and touched here and there with clumps of golden gorse. Never did night approach more gently, or sink over a more peaceful scene. The wild valley of Wastdale was already almost in shadow, and in its bosom lay the lake, dark and unruffled. The front of its mountain wall rose on one side, with higher peaks beyond Langdale Pikes, and, like distant beacons, catching the last signal of sunset. On the other side sloped the valley, dotted here and there with a stone farm-house, half hidden in sheltering trees, and looking almost like the grey boulders that cropped out among the woods and heather.

High on the mountain-side, commanding the wild valley, guarded by its mountain wall, built of mountain stone, till its long line looked as if but a natural growth of the soil, stood Ormathwaite. The ruddy light of peat fire shone through the windows of the great dining-hall. Maids were passing in and out, through an outer kitchen, bearing dishes and tankards. The household were busy in preparations for the Hallowe'en supper that every year, from time immemorial, had been given by the master of Ormathwaite to his tenants and neighbours. These Hallowe'en festivals were always somewhat important affairs, for, beside the tenantry and country folk, there usually gathered at these times some of the wealthier neighbours and relations of the family,—cousins, nephews and nieces, Scropes and Ormathwaites, from Kendal and Bassenthwaite, who came in cavalcades attended by their grooms and servants. Mrs. Ormathwaite and her granddaughter, who had for some unexplained reason kept much at home for several weeks that autumn, had shown a desire to omit the usual Hallowe'en festivities, but peremptory orders had come from London that the supper should be holden with all its usual cheer. "More especially," Mr. Ormathwaite said, "as to omit any circumstance of rejoicing would argue an indifference to the late great blessing vouchsafed the country in the suppression of seditious risings, which were a feeling very far from my heart." So the usual preparations had been made. For days past there had been nothing but baking and stewing, boiling and roasting, going on in the great kitchen; and the larder shelves were crowded with stores of huge meat-pies, great cakes, bowls of sweet butter, and jars of potted

meats, to say nothing of a row of ducks and moor-fowl that hung in melancholy couples, head downwards, from the larder-hooks. And on the night of which we are speaking the guests, as they neared the wide doors of the kitchen, were greeted by the fragrant fumes of hot cider and spiced ale.

The last rays of the sunset were struggling with the light of the glowing and crackling fire of peat and logs that burnt on the gigantic hearth of the great hall. This hall was certainly the finest portion of Ormathwaite. It ran along the whole length of the western wing of the building, and, though somewhat low, was of noble proportions. The floor was of stone. On one side was a row of deeply-mullioned windows. The upper end of the hall was raised above the lower by two steps, and was further divided by the roof being supported above the steps by a heavy stone archway. In ancient and more primitive times it had been the custom at Ormathwaite for the family to dine in the upper hall, while at the lower a table was set for the servants and any poor wayfarers who asked hospitality. A table stood already spread in this lower hall. The long line of dishes and bright tankards gleamed in the dying sunlight, and from the dark oak rafters the apples were already hung for the sports of the evening. The servants passed to and fro, chattering merrily among themselves, and receiving occasionally orders from the young mistress, who stood at a table near one of the windows of the upper hall. The soft evening light lay mellow and dim on her cheek and busy hands; but the long stiff folds of her green brocaded dress and her fair arms, from which the delicate lace of her sleeves was pinned back, glowed in the strengthening firelight. It was much as she stands in her portrait that still hangs at Ormathwaite,—a somewhat stately figure, with dark eyes looking down upon you with a light sprung, perhaps, from the same blood that warmed the veins of her intrepid great-aunt the baronne,—a proud, sweet face, and graced, spite of stiff bodice or powdered hair, with the freshness and bloom of a mountain maid. She was busily cutting sweetened bread and filling dishes, that the maids carried away as they were ready to the lower table.

"Thy baking is somewhat heavy, Alice," said the young lady to one of the maids who stood near her.

"It's nobbat as heavy as my heart was when I baked," replied the girl. "You canna mak' ca-ak nor bre-ad light and good without an e-asy mind."

The young lady sighed. "These are sad days!" she said.

"My heart gaes against all this merrymacking," said Alice. "Last Hallowe'en was like na'a Hallowe'en iver I sa'a before, and this is maist as wae'ful."

"Those girls seem merry enough, I'm sure, Alice. Hear how they are laughing!"

"Oh, those girls would laugh, an' have their crack,—th' empty-

headed fools!—if th' house was burning about their ears. Look at Betty Thwaite giggling there, and poor Jim Gregg sae lately laid in a felon's grave. It's all the same to them whether it's Whig or true loyal man they have for a sweetheart. Eh! there they are," she continued, pointing with her knife towards the lower hall, "hanging their apples and getting ready their tapers for lating, as if nothing had happened since last October."

The young lady sighed again. She seemed only half to listen to the words of her companion, who continued in a low but excited tone:—

"They're not a' such fickle wavering bodies, though. There's that poor soul, Abigail Trench; my heart fairly aches for her. She goes moping about caring for naught, and last year she was as gay and happy a young wife as you could find in th' country-side; and now there she is with her bairn alone in the world, her husband hanged, and her father in th' plantations. I thought my Lord Ascham would think he'd got his Devil's pay for his treachery when he saw her wild, woeful face yesterday; for Abigail and I were standing by the well as he and young Mr. Ashburnham rode by."

"Mr. Ashburnham!" said Olivia, quickly. "Mr. Ashburnham is in London, Alice."

"Nay, nay,—it were him, and no other. I thought it strange mysel' that he sud ha' been in th' north, and not have been here. He's mostly keen enough to show his face at Ormathwaite when he gets up from London," said Alice, with a shrewd glance at her mistress.

"Mr. Ashburnham has often business with my grandmother," said Olivia, with some dignity.

"Yes, yes," said Alice, half to herself,—"*bees do their business where there's honey too.*" Then she continued quickly, as if desiring to say her say while she had the opportunity:—"He's a brave, well-spoken gentleman, and one that will always get folk to gae his gait for all his quiet ways; but his back wad break afore it wad bend, and he's a Whig every inch of him; and I wad na' trust a Whig, mistress,—I wad na' trust a Whig no further nor I could see him."

"Hush, Alice," said Olivia; "it matters not what Mr. Ashburnham's politics are to thee or—or—to any of us."

"You have enough troubles of your own mistress," said Alice. "Deary me, it makes my heart melt in my body wi' fears, when I think of to-night! All this coming and going; the strange folk all through the house; and the lady's maid from London, wi' her high heels, clipping and mincing her words, and prying into all the closets. I had liked to raise my hand on her to-day, when I found her going along the passage to the east wing, and telling me she'd lost her way!"

"Do not let the others hear thee, Alice. Did she seem to suspect aught?"

"I reckon not; and I scared her so she will not venture there again! I told her she'd better come down, unless she'd a mind to meet the ghost that walks the east wing passage; that I wouldn't be there after dusk for a' the gold of London." And Alice smiled grimly.

"Thou hast a bold tongue, Alsie," said Olivia; "thou wouldst not shrink, I think, whatever happened."

"Ye mun say I've bold tongue, mistress; and when I mun tell a lie, I'd as lief tell it boldly as tenderly; but I can tell you, mistress, it's maist show, for often when I'm bragging it afore them here, my heart feels like a dish o' your jellies, all shaking and quaking. I shall na' have a minute's peace o' mind till all this suppering is over, and the strange folk gone."

"Hast thou heard anything fresh to cause us fear?" said Olivia eagerly, reading a meaning in the woman's manner she could scarcely gather from her words.

Alice drew a step nearer, and said in a low voice, "I'd fain save you the trouble and the rack of care it will give you, but it's better m' happen that you knowed to-night."

"Speak out! speak out, Alice!"

"Michael told me when he came back from Kendal how last night he saw three militiamen riding along with an officer that they seemed to be attending. They stopped at th' inn just outside o' Strammon Gate, where Michael was watering his horse. The men were very busy talking. Hearing th' word 'Ormathwaite,' Michael pricked his ears, and drew nearer. Just then a fine young gentleman on horse-back comes up and joins them with 'a good evening, my men,' and falls into talk with them, seeming to give them some orders, for they soon rode off together, he leading the way."

"Did Michael say who the officer was?" said Olivia, whose face had grown pale during the recital.

"You mind the soft-spoken Southern man that was speering about here last year along wi' the militiamen?"

"Oh, Alice, the spy from London!"

Alice nodded her head. "Yes, from what Michael said, 'twas surely he."

Olivia dropped the knife she was holding. "We are undone!" she said in a smothered voice. "Oh, my poor cousin!" After a moment she asked, "Who was the gentleman who joined them?"

"Ay, that I canna say. Michael know'd him, or know'd summat about him, but he wouldn't name him, though I fleyt him sorely. He said it were a grievous accusation to bring against any man, and he would na' name a name till he knew more. Michael's so mighty fanciful and religious, I've no patience wi' his whimsies sometimes!"

Olivia stood for a moment considering what she had just heard.

"Alice," she said, "we must send these tidings to the East Chamber as soon as possible. I can scarcely steal away to-night without being missed. Thou wilt carry up the food to-night?"

Alice nodded her head. "I'll warrant you the poor gentleman shall not go without his supper on Hallowe'en. I'll carry it up in my apron, and cover it wi' a bundle of dried herbs, just as if I were going to hang them i' one of th' garrets."

"Tell him, then, what thou hast told me, and say that I will see Michael this evening, and hear if there be any fresh danger on foot; and that I will find means of sending word to him to-night, when the house is quiet, or sooner if it be needful. Tell him the house is all astir; and bid him, of all things, to lie quiet, and show no light in the windows." Olivia had scarcely said these words when the door opened, and a young lady entered, powdered and arrayed in full evening costume, followed by a young gentleman almost as magnificent as herself. This was Miss Katherine Ormathwaite, who had just returned from London, and her cousin, John Serope.

"Here she is!" cried the young lady, running towards Olivia, "here she is! she has donned an apron, the pretty housewife that she is! Listen to me, Cinderella; whip off your apron, *ma chère*, and make haste to the drawing-room and receive some fresh guests!"

"You had best keep there yourself, dear cousin," said Olivia, "your dress is mightily out of place in my kitchen."

"'Tis pretty, *n'est-ce pas*?" said the young lady, spreading the shining folds of her dress and sweeping round with the flowing curve of a figure in a minuet. "In London it was pronounced irresistible, and though I only wore it once, 'tis faded, I fear, already. What was that you were saying, sir?" continued she, looking over her shoulder upon the long train, and then turning to Mr. Serope.

"I say nothing in the universe can be fresher, completer, or sweeter," replied he, looking at the young lady with glowing eyes.

"Pshaw! that is because you know nothing about it, Cousin Jock, you have never been to London. Heigho! I wish you could see my white silk taffeta, Olivia, with the purple fringes to match the amethysts my aunt gave me on my birthday. Oh, 'tis a sweet thing!" said the gay young lady, continuing to sail round and round her tall cousin, making a profound curtsy to the somewhat bewildered young man with each saucy speech. "His Excellency General von Schmeichelmütze made me a mighty pretty compliment the night I wore it at Lady Betty Bellamy's. Mr. Hamilton prayed me to join them at cards, 'unless,' saith he, 'you fear the general, madame, who is a Cæsar in piquet as he is in the field.' His Excellency makes me a bow, and says, 'Such charms are more powerful than the arms of Rome. I come, I see I am vanquished!' Only he said it in Latin, and my father whispered me the meaning, and I

made a curtsy,—so. Do you understand Latin, Cousin Jock? 'Tis a mighty useful tongue, they say."

"I can conjugate one verb, which will make as pretty a compliment as the baron's, and perhaps be more true," said Mr. Scrope. "Amo, Am——"

"Oh, 'tis a motto from a school-book! For shame, sir, to mock me!" she cried, tossing up her head.

"My dear Kate, you are too hasty; let me explain,——"

"My dear Jock, you are too slow; I will do no such thing. Come, Olivia, let us go, or you will be too late for your new guests. Indeed, I had nearly forgotten them myself."

"Who are they, dear Kate?" said Olivia. "What do you mean?"

"Lydia and I were standing in the gallery window, and saw three gentlemen riding at the farther side of the lake. We could see them plainly. They will be here anon, for they had but to ride round the head of the water. Would you like to know who they are? Nay, you shall guess." She stole behind Olivia and clapped her hands suddenly over her eyes, singing, "Here's a thing, and a very fine thing, and what will you do with this fine thing? Number one, my Lord Ascham."

"He honours this poor house too much," said Olivia, still blindfolded.

"Next comes," continued Katherine, "booted and spurred, Colonel Hampden."

"My uncle!" cried Olivia, "he is very welcome."

"The third, lagging behind, stiff and straight in the saddle, and looking more whiggish than ever, Mr. Ashburnham. What comes he to Westmoreland for when all his kin suppose him in London, eh?"

"Oh, cease this folly, dear Kate, you hurt me!" said Olivia, pulling down her cousin's hands.

"Oh, la farouche!" cried the young lady, bursting into a peal of laughter. "And you are pale instead of red, my dear. Come now, Cousin Jock, let us go to the drawing-room. Oh, ciel! I would not live in the country and wear an apron and be so cross for all the world."

Olivia raised her head as the door closed, and her countenance wore anything but a tranquil or happy look. "Bring hither the pies and set them there," said she to one of the maids, "and, Betty, see to the jugs for the ale; and if any of my lord's people come with him they are to be served with the rest."

Alice had been looking through one of the long windows while Kate Ormathwaite and Mr. Scrope were talking with her young mistress. Now she turned and said, "The gentlemen have come. My lord has gone up to the hall-door and alighted, and the groom is bringing his horse to the stables; but the Colonel and Mr. Ashburnham are walking up together this way. They canna, for sure, mean to enter by the kitchen place!"

She had scarcely spoken when the two gentlemen appeared in the

doorway of the lower hall. Olivia laid down the knife she held and her arms dropped to her side; but she stood erect and still in her apron and turned-up sleeves, awaiting their approach. Colonel Hampden advanced first to meet his niece.

"My dear Olivia," he cried, saluting her gallantly, "I did not look for the pleasure of seeing you here. Upon my word, your housewife's gear is hugely becoming! I heard there was feasting going on, and came in to beg a draught of cider after our long ride. Mr. Ashburnham, whom we fell in with on the road, is here also you see, and I promised him a welcome."

"Those who are with you, uncle, are always welcome," said Olivia.

Mr. Ashburnham bowed so low that his hat brushed the stone floor, and the young lady responded by a curtsy as profound and ceremonious; but as they both looked up, it was observable that while the young man had become somewhat pale, Miss Ormathwaite's pallor had given place to an extraordinarily becoming blush.

"I am glad I have fetched Ashburnham with me," said the Colonel, laughing; "he will be quite at home here. He is a London bean, and has learned Heaven knows what new graces, minuets, and follies during his stay in town."

"I protest,—" said Mr. Ashburnham hastily.

"The London beauties have smiled on him, says Mistress Ramour," continued the Colonel without heeding the interruption; "indeed, I hear they have a new style of queue in the barbers' windows, called 'the Ashburnham queue.' Ha, ha, ha! And yet he has torn himself away, for some unknown reason, and come to Westmoreland, to the astonishment of his own friends. Make him confess his mission, Olivia."

"I trust it is no evil tidings that have brought Mr. Ashburnham to the north," said Olivia.

"Not at all," said Colonel Hampden, "not at all. His own mother did not look for him. It is some weighty business, be sure of that. He was mighty grave and moody as we rode along. You would have supposed my lord and I were the young bucks and he the grey-haired sobersides. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, Ashburnham, I thought you'd got a fit of the toothache, I swear I did!"

The Colonel took the flagon that Olivia had just filled with the smoking ale. "I drink to the Rose of Ormathwaite!" he said gallantly. "Come, Ashburnham, have you no compliment? What was your last couplet for your fair friends in town?"

"I do not get such couplets by heart," said Mr. Ashburnham. "I know not how to pledge Miss Ormathwaite, unless it be my service, but in that I pledge all." And he bowed low, and raised the glass to his lips.

Olivia blushed and turned to leave the room.

"Ah, I see you must wait till he gets to the drawing-room to hear his pretty speeches," said the Colonel, laughing. "I assure you he

makes toasts quite à la mode sometimes. How has a country gentleman mastered so much style so fast, eh, Livvy?"

"Mr. Ashburnham is a courtier now, I believe," replied the young lady, casting a momentary glance upon that gentleman as she swept past him through the doorway. There was something of bitterness pointing both words and look.

As soon as they entered the drawing-room, Miss Ormathwaite joined a group of the guests in the deep embrasure of a window, and scarce vouchsafed the unlucky Mr. Ashburnham a glance. The Colonel took his seat at the elbow of old Mrs. Ormathwaite's chair and spake in softened tones, subdued, as who was not, by that gentle and loving presence. The rest of the company drank coffee and played cards, or listened to the harpsichord. The young hostess moved about the room with a face perhaps too pale and cold to be inspiring to her guests, for without doubt there was a shadow over the whole party. Katherine Ormathwaite, who had grown tired of Lord Ascham's stories, beckoned Mr. Ashburnham to her side, as he stood silent and moody by the fireplace, and then whispered and rattled away a whole ocean of town gossip. Mr. Ashburnham bent his head to listen with a very good grace, but the gloom of his visage might have led one to suppose his mind was occupied with more serious and troublesome thoughts than could possibly have been suggested by the gay and vivacious Kate.

As for the rest, the clicking of the cards on the table and the jingling of the spinet almost took the place of conversation. At last Colonel Hampden, throwing down his cards and pushing the winnings to Mrs. Scrope, said, "I am beaten, my dear madam, and I must defer my revenge, for here is Mrs. Ormathwaite, and I know she is anxious that her guests in the hall below should not be neglected."

"I have been waiting with impatience for the close of your game, my dear Colonel," said Mrs. Ormathwaite; then turning to Lord Ascham, "my lord, will you give me your arm?"

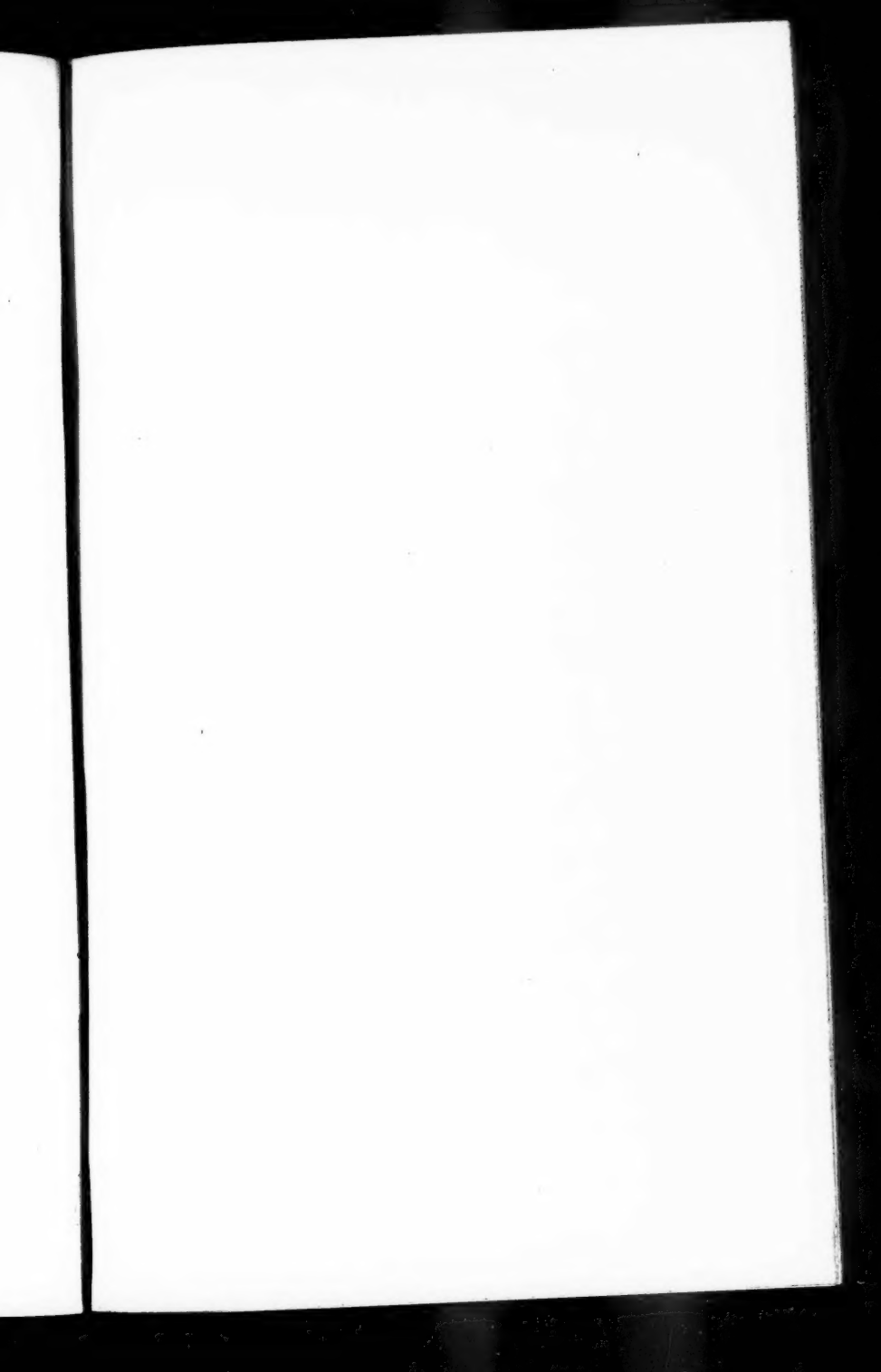
"I protest I am thankful for the change," whispered Katherine to her cousin, John Scrope, as the company rose to leave the room. "For goodness-sake, Cousin Jock, take me away from this man. I have talked for the last hour just to keep from yawning."

"I thought you seemed quite wide awake," replied Mr. Scrope with some dignity.

"For shame, sir, to speak so! I suppose if I had said Mr. Ashburnham was witty and charming you'd have flown into a passion; and when I tell you the truth that he is dull and tiresome, and that I talked to keep myself awake, you make a long face and begin to scold. 'Tis not possible to please you!"

"But, dear Kate, listen to reason for one moment."

As, however, listening to reason is never very pleasant, we will leave our pair, and follow the others to the hall.





"Tell me what you have been doing with yourself all this time."